

# HISTORY

OF THE  
LIFE and DEATH

of that Antient Father of the Church

Dr Joh. Thauler,

who lived at *Colen* in *Germany* in the year of  
our Lord, 1346. where he was in a  
miraculous manner turned from his vain  
conversation to an extraordinary degree  
of holiness of life.

With many of his Precepts, Positions, and  
Sermons; but especially the Means and Man-  
ner how he came to be so highly Illuminated,  
and to the understanding of the secret Mysteries  
of the Gospel, &c.

---

Faithfully Translated out of *Latine*.

---

Printed for *Lodowick Lloyd*, and sold at  
his Shop at the *Castle* in *Cornewall*.

THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
THE  
CITY  
OF  
LONDON  
FROM  
THE  
FIRST  
SETTLEMENT  
TO  
THE  
PRESENT  
TIME

# London.

London is a city in Great Britain, situated on the River Thames, about 20 miles from the mouth of the river. It is the largest city in Great Britain, and one of the largest in Europe. It is a city of great antiquity, and has been the seat of government since the time of the Romans. It is a city of great commerce, and is the centre of the British Empire. It is a city of great beauty, and is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. It is a city of great interest, and is one of the most interesting cities in the world.

London is a city of great antiquity, and has been the seat of government since the time of the Romans. It is a city of great commerce, and is the centre of the British Empire. It is a city of great beauty, and is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. It is a city of great interest, and is one of the most interesting cities in the world.

ly  
far  
da  
G  
wa  
th





T H E

## H I S T O R Y

Of the Life of the sublime and illuminated Divine, Dr. *John Thauler*, who at *Colin* (where he lived) was in an Extraordinary and Miraculous manner turned from his vain Conversation to an Extraordinary degree of Sanctity, and Holiness of Life.

**I**N the year of our Lord, One thousand three hundred forty six, there lived a Doctor of Divinity in *Colin* in *Germany*, a frequent Preacher exceedingly followed, and famous for his Doctrine far and near. A certain Layman abundantly endowed and anointed with Divine Grace, hearing his fame, and being thrice warned in a Dream to go to the City where the Doctor lived, (which was at the least

## *The History of the Life*

thirty mile distance from the place, where then the Layman was) resolved with himself to Travel thither, and try what it would please Divine grace to bring to pass; then he takes his journey, arrives at the City where the Doctor lived; attentively heard him five times Preach; In which while he understood in the Spirit, that the Doctor was by nature an ingenuous Man, of a mild, sweet, and courteous behaviour, and excellently well skilled in the Letter of the Scripture; but obscurely and glimmeringly understanding it, being without the Light of Divine grace. The Layman exceedingly hereupon pitying his condition, went to him, and thus entered into discourse with him. Reverend Sir, I am come above thirty miles to sit at your feet, and hear your Doctrine, drawn by the fame of your excellent abilities, and already have I heard five of your Sermons; Therefore I beseech you for Gods sake vouchsafe while I stay here, to be my Confessor. The courteous Dr. refusing not the motion; The Layman oft came to confession, which he performed with much simplicity and humility: and when ever he thought fit to receive the most sacred Body of our Lord, he received it at the Doctors hands. Twelve weeks in this manner being spent,

*of Doctor John Thauler.*

spent, the Layman came to the Doctor with a request, which he thus uttered : Reverend Master, I beseech you for Gods sake reach us in a Sermon the most compendious way of attaining the highest degree of perfection, that this Life is capable of. What dost thou mean Son (quoth the Doctor) to what purpose would it be to Preach such sublime matters to you, who ( I suppose ) would hardly be able to understand one word ? Though possibly (answered the Layman) I may not ( Reverend Sir ) be able to understand you, yet at least I shall breath and pant after, and with hearty and frequent Prayers desire those things you shall deliver. Beside, a great multitude of people come together to hear you ; now if but one of these shall rightly understand what you shall say, your labour will not be lost. I but (said the Doctor) if I should be put upon that you desire ( good Son ) it would cost me first much pains and study, and a great deal of labour, to gather what would be requisite to the business, and to digest it into fit method. But whatever excuses the Doctor made, the Layman would not give over his entreaty till the Doctor passed his word, that he would Preach such a Sermon as he desired. It fell out shortly after that the Dr.

Preach'd

## *The History of the Life*

Preach'd in a certain Monastery; And Sermon being ended; he told the Congregation, that those whom other business hindred not, might resort thither upon the third day following; for I am desired (quoth he) to Preach a Sermon, in which I must shew, by what means one may most compendiously come to the highest degree of perfection attainable in this Life. The third day being come, very many flocked to the place; among the rest, betimes in the morning thither hastens the Layman, that he might get a convenient place where he might the better hear, and understaud the Doctor. The Doctor comes as he had appointed, and begins this following Discourse.

*In this following most excellent Discourse, there are laid down four and twenty points, by which may be known who are truly illuminated men, and true contemplators.*

**S**O great & many things (dearly beloved) are to be handled at this time touching the Argument, I lately promised to discourse upon, that according to my constant custome, I cannot take the Gospel of the day for my Text, nor use many Latine words.

But

*of Doctor John Thauler.*

But notwithstanding those matters that I shall handle, shall be such as may be easily confirmed out of Scripture.

In the first place (beloved) I would not have you ignorant, how there are very many to be found, who attain to a clear knowledge, understanding, and a rational discerning in Heavenly matters; but it is altogether by Images and Forms in their fancy; impressed there sometimes by the study of Scripture, sometimes without it. Many of these when this speculative Light of their own intellect by the aforesaid means; either by the study of Scripture, or some way else begins to shine, they sit down in it, abundantly satisfied; but all such (questionless) are far enough from the top and highest degree of perfection: but if any one such could be found, who had pierced and passed through the fore-mentioned attainment, and were totally and centrally mortified to it, and who had got above all sorts of Images and Forms in the fancy; Such a one would infinitely be more dear and acceptable to God, than an hundred thousand of the other sort of men, who live in their own habitual insinuations, and modes, taken up by themselves, out of self-will, and insensible and intellectual Images, so totally taken up with them,

## *The History of the Life*

them, that they take no care to deny and mortifie themselves. For indeed God is altogether hinder'd from entering into and possessing such, by reason of their self will, and their own proper working in their own strength, by which they are detained in their own dearly beloved, and delighted in intellectual imaginations. But those that have passed through such, and by a kind of dying have resigned up themselves to God, and have gone out of all manner of imaginary contemplations, and finally with humble resignation, have offer'd and given up themselves, free and naked, above all intellectual imaginations, (as *St. Dionisius* saith, that the Light of Faith requires, that a man should mount above the utmost power and capacity of reason, or intellect :) such (I say) as have come to this state, in them God finds a resting place, where he may dwell and work all their works in them; when, where, and in what manner he pleaseth: For when as God seeth in them no impediment, he works in them his own work, and doth act and lead them to himself, and in himself. Such men as these are unknown to any; because there lives and conversations are hidden to all, unless those that are of the same Attainment, State, or Completion, of which I fear there



*of Doctor John Thauler.*

there are very few. But to this height and perfection of Life, no man can attain, but by the profoundest and deepest humility, a perspicuous and pure intellect, and a clear and illuminated reason. Although indeed (which cannot be denied) once many intelligent Spirits which by Nature are nothing else but pure intelligences, fowly erred, and fell from that eternal Unity, and were also forever secluded out of the Chorus of Angels; the same thing likewise happens every day to such which look upon themselves with self-pleasing flattery, and by usurping self-will, and a vain complacency in their own subtilty, make themselves like those fallen Angels. Wherefore (beloved) it concerns us to know, and to be able to distinguish, who are truly illuminated and wise Contemplators. Truly I have found so far as may be gathered from Scripture; four and twenty Particulars which a truly illuminated Man ought to have in him: which Particulars I shall willingly deliver at this time, and so conclude.

The First Particular, even the chief Doctor of Doctors, and Teacher of all true Wisdom and Knowledge; Christ Jesus our Lord mentions, where he saith, *By this John 13:10*  
*shall all men know that you are my Disciples.*

## The History of the Life

if you love one the other, and shall keep that  
my Commandment, which I commanded  
John 15. you, that you love one another even as I have  
loved you; as if he should have said; al-  
though ye have all knowledge, and skill, all  
Mystery; if there be wanting Fidelity, and  
Charity, it profiteth nothing. For it is said  
of Balaam, that he was endowed with so  
piercing and subtile a wit, and reason, that  
he foresaw those things which God many  
hundred years afterward brought to pass,  
and manifested: but this profited him no-  
thing, because as he ought he did not faith-  
fully in love adhere to the truth known;  
Thus much shall suffice for the first point.

2 The Second Point is this; namely, That  
he be free from, and totally delivered from  
self; which notwithstanding will never seem  
so to him, but rather he will always think  
that he ought yet more and more to be di-  
vested of self, and to renounce all things.

3 The Third thing is, That he be deeply and  
thoroughly resign'd to God, in so much that  
God may not find in him the least impedi-  
ment; but that he may work freely all his  
works in him, which perfection he will not  
rashly ascribe to himself, but will think  
himself of all men farthest off from it.



that The Fourth followeth, That he do totally  
indeed go out of, and deny himself, and all things  
have else, in which he hath heretofore inordi-  
; al- nately loved, sought or intended himself,  
l, all whether they have been things Temporal  
and or things Eternal,

said Fifthly, That he seek not his own or  
th so himself in any measure; either in himself, or  
that any Creature.

any Sixtly, That he alwayes, and in all places  
pass, diligently attend, and observe what God re-  
no- quires of him, and what he would have  
with him to do, and chearfully (relying upon Di-  
vn; vine Grace) perform it; and satisfie Divine  
expectation; but not in the least what ever,  
that from thence arrogate to himself any thing.

om- Seventhly, That continually without in-  
teem- termission he conform himself to Divine Will,  
ink so as that he will nothing else but what God  
di- willeth.

and Eightly, That he would so strongly and  
bar powerfully work and exercise himself in  
di- God, and by and immense force, strongest  
his bands of love so bind and unite himself to  
nor him, that God may not as it were do any  
ink thing in himself without him, nor he like-  
wise perform any thing without God.

The Ninthly, That in all things which shall  
happen to him, whether they be pleasant or

bitter, yea in every work, in every performance, in every place, at all times, he enjoys sensibly Divine presence.

10 Tenthly, That he receive nothing at all whether it be grateful or grievous, as from the hands of any Creature; but all things nakedly and simply as from the hands of God. Whatever God shall do, or permit to be done by Creatures, he receive it no otherways then as from God himself.

11 The Eleventh point is this, That he never suffer himself to be in any measure overcome, or taken with a natural delight or favour of any Creature, without true and accountable necessity.

12 The Twelfth point is this, That neither he be too much deprest or overwhelm'd, nor immoderately vexed or inwardly grieved, with any whatever adversity which may happen to him from the truth, but alwayes constantly adhere to the truth.

13 The Thirteenth point, That he suffer not himself to be deceived by any false Light, or by any glistering shew of any Creatures; but chearfully and lovingly leave all things as he found them, making the best of every thing, and contending earnestly to be made the better by every thing, and by nothing to be made worse.

*of Doctor John Thauler.*

11

The Fourteenth point, That he be alwayes upon his guard, sufficiently provided of, and armed with all sorts of Vertues to resist all Vices whatsoever, that so he may never be otherways then Conquerer, and in all conflicts bear away the Palm of Victory.

14

The Fifteenth point, That he nakedly endeavour to understand and contemplate (so far as God permits, and he be able) truth, as it is in it self, and according to it lead his Life, and study to satisfie and answer the known truth in every thing.

15

The Sixteenth point, That he be perfect, just and upright, and that he esteem himself nothing less than so.

16

The Seventeenth point, That he be sparing in Words, yet full of inward Vigour and Life.

17

The Eighteenth point, That his Life be faithful, retired, humble, which by a good Example rather then Words may Preach to all, and Speak by doing.

18

The Nineteenth point, That he suffer himself willingly to be overcome by all which contend with him, and that in all things which belong to himself, but not in things which concern God.

19

20

The Twentieth point, That above all things he seek the Glory of God, and aime at, and intend nothing else in all his actions.

21

The Twenty first point, That he rejoyce not at all in any Priviledge, which he hath in any thing above others; but that he altogether himself is unworthy of the least.

22

The Twenty second point, That from his Heart he believe himself to be one of the most unprofitablest men in the World; yet nevertheless, let there be always found in him great Vigour, Faith, Hope and Charity; and let him not at all value his own Wisdom, nor all his works done by humane reason.

23

The Twenty third point, That in all his Words and Works he set before him as in a Glasse, the Life and Doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that in them he continually contemplate himself, and as much as possible, renounce, cast away, and mortifie all whatsoever shall be found in him, unlike to the lovely Image of our Saviour.

24

The Twenty fourth and last point, That after all, he now as it were first begin, like a little Child as yet, to make proficiency in true profound deep and perfect humility, and think no other ways, than that he is now to begin

begin to implore Divine benignity, that it would find him out a way and afford assistance; whereby he may become a good man. And if he be esteemed so by some, or else for that cause he appear vile and base in the eyes of men; even that will be more grateful and acceptable to him, then if he should enjoy the favour and good-will of all.

But I fear my beloved, least I have been too tedious; Therefore these are the signs of a rational and purged ground, which the Splendour and beautiful Image of all truth doth enlighten and teach. Let every one therefore look within himself, and diligently search, whether he find within himself these twenty four Points, which if he do let him rejoyce; but if he do not, let him know that his understanding, though never so lofty and towering, nor all his subtile and witty works of his own reason, worth a rush; for he that is the Fountain & Pattern of all truth, can perform in him no supernatural work, unless he do preuent him by his singular and special grace, as we read he did to St. Paul. But this in my judgment happens very rarely in these our times. Finally, let the Eternal Truth our Lord God, grant that we may all be made by his grace, true Contemplators

in true and perfect humility, to his Praise and Glory. *Amen.*

*It follows how the Layman did in secret partly discover to the Doctor his hidden Sanctity, and how he convinced him that he was yet in the night of Ignorance, and that his Vessel was unclean, and that himself was of the number of the Pharisees.*

**T**HE fore-written Sermon being ended, the Layman straight hastning to his Inne, there Writes it out word for word as it was delivered by the Doctor, comes with his Notes to the Doctor, and said thus to him; Reverend Sir, your Sermon I have writ out fair, and if it be not too troublesome I will repeat it out of my Paper.

*Doctor,* Truly I'll very willingly hear it: then the Layman read the whole Sermon, which being done, he spake thus to the Doctor.

*Layman.* I pray Sir tell me if I have omitted any of your Words, that I may write them.

*Doctor.* Believe it dear Son, you have exactly taken my Sermon word for word, as



I Preach'd it; and I'll assure you might I gain never so much I could not again write it so exactly and verbatim as you have done, unless I would take again the same pains which I did in the search of Scriptures; and I profess I cannot now sufficiently admire your happy wit and parts, and that you should so oft make your confession to me, and yet I never perceive till now. Then the Layman made as though he would take his leave of the Doctor, and said to him.

*Layman.* I intend (Sir) God willing to return home.

*Doctor.* Away, away, what is it that should compel you to return home, whereas you have neither Wife nor Children to take care of; and what hinders, but that, sith you have no body at home, you may as well live here as there. I'll promise you shortly (God willing) I will Preach another Sermon of the utmost perfection of a Spiritual Life.

*Layman.* I'll assure you Sir I came not hither for the Sermons, but that I hoped by Gods Grace assisting, I should do some good.

*Doctor.* What good prethee Son did you think to do here; sith you are a simple Layman and ignorant of Scriptures, neither permitted

mitted to Preach? Pray stay here a while, and peradventure by Gods assistance I will give you such a Sermon, as you will gladly hear.

*Layman.* There is something Sir that I would willingly have spoke to you, but I doubt whether you can patiently bear it.

*Doctor.* Prethee Son speak boldly what thou hast to say; I trust in God I shall patiently bear it, what ever it be.

*Layman.* Behold Reverend Sir, you glister in your Priestly dignity, & lately Preach a Sermon to us full fraught, with excellent precepts; but you take no care to hold them forth in your Life and Conversation, and even now how childishly did you say to me, stay here and I will Preach you another Sermon that shall please me. But take this for certain Sir, that neither your Sermons nor any Words whatever, which can in this Life be outwardly spoken, can be much profitable to me. Nay I'll assure you, the Sermons of men do oftner do me hurt, then profit me; because that oftentimes various Images (or Imaginations) do insinuate themselves into me by reason of those Sermons, which afterwards returning home, I can hardly with much and long labour again rid my self of or forget; and (Sir) if you be



remembered; you had among others, this passage in your Sermon. That he ought to be free and clear from all Images (or Imaginations) to whom the chief Doctor and Teacher of Souls Christ Jesus will vouchsafe to come; who I will assure you as oft as he is pleased to come to me, he teacheth me more in the space of an hour, then either you (Master Doctor) or all the Doctors in the World, could teach me till Doomsday.

*Doctor.* Prethee, dear Son, for the Lords death sake, stay with me here a longer time.

*Layman.* Truly (Mr. Doctor) you enforce me to stay by this deep adjuration, and if out of obedience to God, I do yield to stay here, it shall be upon this condition, that you promise me faithfully, that whatever hath past or shall pass between us, you will keep secret under the privacy of confession.

*Doctor.* That I will assure you (dear Son) I will willingly do, upon the condition, that you will stay longer with me. Then the Layman after this manner spake to the Doctor.

*Layman.* Mr. Doctor, in your late before-mentioned Sermon, you delivered indeed to

us many excellent good things; yet whilst you were speaking, such a similitude as this came into my head, that me thought your good discourses did no otherwayes proceed from you, then as if good and generous Wine were drawn through muddy dregs.

*Doctor.* Prethee (Son) what meanest thou by this similitude.

*Layman.* Nothing else (Mr. Doctor) but me thought, your Vessel was not clean, nor rinsed from dreggs; and that's the reason that the Letter killeth you, and (alasis) you dayly suffer it, yet dayly more and more to kill you; for (as you better know) the Scripture saith, the Letter killeth, but the Spirit quickeneth and maketh alive. Nevertheless the same Letter that now doth kill you, would (if you would) quickly quicken you. But truly at present for your condition it is this; You are yet in the Dark, and there is no Light in you, by which you might clearly and distinctly understand the Letter, and truly as yet you belong to the number of the Pharisees.

*Doctor.* I profess (dear Son) since the hour I was born, I never heard from any man such hard language.

*Layman.* Very good (Mr. Doctor) I pray where is now your Sermon? See, see how

how you are catch'd ! but besides, though it may be my words may seem hard to you ; yet intruth it is so as I have said , as I shall easily prove even from your self.

*Doctor.* Really I would willingly see that , for I cannot tell that ever I cared for that generation of Pharisees.

*Layman.* In the first place (Mr. Doctor) give me leave to shew you how it is that the Letter killeth you ; you know (dear Sir) that as soon as ever you came to years of discretion, you betook your self to the study of Books, in which notwithstanding you did onely seek your self, and are not at all even to this day free from that vice ; but truely you are (though secretly) in your nature, proud, and do much relie upon that knowledge , and attribute much to that title of Doctor , wherewith you were honoured ; neither have you in all these things purely with love and fervency of mind, sought God onely ; Neither out of love have you any Eye to his Glory in all your studies, but do too too much love and seek your self in the applause and favour of poor Creatures, and that especially in one certain person, towards whom you would oft steal a look , and whom I fear you do inordinately love. And this is the reason why the Letter killeth you.

you. That also which I said is too too true likewise ; Namely, that you possess an empty and an unclean vessel ; For indeed you do not in all your actions purely and singly Love God, but in many things you too well know that you seek and love your self. And therefore it is true that I said, that your Vessel is empty and foul with Lees ; from whence it cometh to pass, that that good and generous Wine of Heavenly Doctrine, and Divine word, although in its self excellent and pure, yet passing through such a Vessel doth not at all relish to a purged mind, that heartily loves and bends towards God ; neither doth it profit at all such an one. That which I said besides ; namely , that you did as yet sit in midnight darkness , is also most true, which will evidently appear from hence , that you cannot say that any of the Sermons or instructions proceeded from a supernatural illumination or Divine Grace, but only from art and study. Lastly, in that I did affirm you were a Pharisee, that also I prove to be no less true, although I will not say that you are altogether one of those false Pharisees. But tell me ( Reverend Sir ) did not those false Pharisees seek and love themselves, not in all things , purely aiming at the Glory of God ! And now pray consi-

der  
God  
do  
man  
are  
or  
liv  
V  
th  
ki  
pa  
m  
h  
o  
t  
l  
der

der your self, whether you are not before God a Pharisee, and not a whit better. You do not ( I suppose ) doubt, that there are many living this day who in Gods esteem are no better then Pharisees, yet are so more or less, according to the condition of their lives and conversations.

When as the Layman had said these things; the Doctor affectually embracing him, kissed his Cheek and said; you bring that passage into my mind which is not unlike to my case, and the same things seem to have happend unto me, which did to the woman of *Samarita* near the Well; for you have truly laid open and told me, all my most hidden, and secret miscarriages; but especially that, that I did sometimes secretly cast a glance at a certain Person, who yet notwithstanding knows nothing her self, sith I never yet any way discovered to her that I loved her; Neither doth any man living, I am confident, suspect any such thing. And therefore I doubt not but this secret was revealed to you by God; wherefore I do most earnestly entreat you for Christs passion sake, that you would be now unto me a Spiritual Father, and accept of me a miserable sinner for your Son.

*Layman.* Believe it (Reverend Sir) if you persist

persist thus extravagantly to talk, I will stay no longer here, but speedily return to my Country.

*Doctor.* Nay, but (Son) pray do not so, let me entreat you to stay a while with me, and I will faithfully promise you, that you shall have no such Language for the future : And ( believe it ) I am fully determined to endeavour to amend my Life and take a new course, and to that end, do earnestly desire the furtherance of your good Counsel, and whatever it be that you shall advise me, that (by the Grace of God) I will endeavour to follow and effect.

*Layman.* Truly ( Mr. Doctor ) that is very necessary for you to do, for knowledge of the Letter, hath miserably puffed up and seduced very many learned men, some of them who were altogether false Pharisees, even to the eternal damnation of Hell ; but others to a most grievous and horrible Purgatory. For ( believe it ) 'tis no small matter for a Man to receive from God Almighty, so subtle a natural understanding, and so clear a reason, as by them to be able to understand clearly Divine Scripture ; yet so to mispend this precious talent, as not to study thereby to shape and frame his Life and Conversation, according to the Scripture.

*This*



*This ensuing Discourse contains a Narration, what wonderful and stupendious things God did work by this Layman, and also how for this cause besides others, he obtained so great Grace and Favour, because God found in him an absolute resigned up humility.*

**Doct.** **G**ood Son, let me desire you to take the pains for God sake, to shew me by what means you have attained to so perfect a life; how you began, what have been your exercises, and finally by what rules you have framed your life and conversation.

**Layman.** I'll assure you Mr. Doctor, your desire is altogether a simple one; for certainly should I take it upon me to rehearse, or write all those great things, which God Almighty within these seven years hath vouchsafed to work in me, a miserable sinner, I dare say you have not a Book of that Volumn as to be able to contain it all; nevertheless, I shall willingly tell you some things; which at this time are most fit for  
C you.

you. In the first place, it was an exceeding mercy, that God did indulge unto me even this very thing; namely, that I were endowed with a true profound and most resigned up humility: For my exercises it will not much concern you to know what they were, that I observed outwardly in my Body, sith that the dispositions, natures, and complexions, are so divers. But this is a sure rule, that whosoever doth from the bottom of his heart, humbly resign up himself to God, him God will lead by inward temptations, and outward occurrences into such exercises, as he knows to be most profitable unto him, and such as (if he will) he can best bear; for he that is inquisitive to know from divers, what are their exercises, is wont for the most part to be deceived, and led away. For each man telling his proper exercises, when he would fain follow and imitate, no regard being had of his own strength, it's no marvel if he be thereby deceived and lead away. For it oftentimes comes to pass, that those exercises which are very good for one, and exceedingly helpful, may to another, if he persist in the using of them, be pernicious and destructive. And hence it is, that the Devil very oft is wont with false suggestions to perswade men, whom he sees to be of a

weak



ling  
ven  
en-  
re-  
s it  
hat  
my  
and  
sure  
om  
od,  
ns,  
ses,  
im,  
ar;  
di-  
the  
ay.  
es,  
no  
no  
ad  
at  
ne,  
if  
us  
he  
ns  
a  
k

weak nature and constitution, to take upon  
them the most strict and rigid exercises. To  
this end, that either thereby they may shor-  
ten their dayes, or get an infirm and crazy  
brain; which thing that you may the better  
understand, I will tell you briefly what hap-  
pened to me at the beginning of my conver-  
sion. I did peruse as it happened at that time,  
a Book which in the German tongue, treats  
of the Lives of the Saints; and when I  
marked each of them, their austere and  
strict manner of Life, I began thus to think  
with my self; these were men in this World  
aswell as thou, and peradventure did never  
so grievously offend God as thou hast done.  
Hereupon I had a great mind to imitate  
each of these Saints in something or other,  
with as severe and rigorous exercises.  
Whereby in a little time I contracted such  
exceeding weakness, that I were even at the  
point of death. But one day above the rest it  
happened, that about Sun-rising, having be-  
yond measure continued my exercise, that  
through exceeding weakness and weariness,  
even whilst I were at my exercise, I fell fast  
asleep: my thought in my sleep I heard a  
kind of voyce saying to me, Go to, self-will'd  
man, if you kill your self before your time,  
you shall certainly suffer for it most grievous

punishment. But if thou wilt suffer thy self to be exercised by God, he will do it infinitely better then thou thy self canst do, by the counsel of the Devil. At these words, especially at the naming of the Devil, such a fear & terrour seized one me, that I suddenly waked out of sleep, and rising, began to think with my self, that I had taken up the foresaid exercises rashly, and without advice; wherefore immediatly I hyed me to a Wood which was close by the place where I then were. There I made my case known in order, to a certain old Hermite, and entreated him that he would give me his advice. The old man having heard me out, gave me this answer: If thou wouldst have me give thee counsel, you must first tell me what the manner of your Life hath been, and what have been your exercises. I told him as I were bidden, all my strict exercises, and how I had read over the Lives of the Saints, and how I had a great mind to imitate them. Then he asked me, by whose advise did I do thus; I confessed to him, that that which I had done, I had done by no mans advice but my own, and out of my own will. If so said he, then take it for certain, it was the Devils counsel; and therefore you had need to take great heed that you follow him

no

no more, but resign and give up your self wholly to God, and he will exercise you far better, than either you or the Devil can: Therefore according to this old mans advice, I instantly gave over my exercises, and did with all my heart give up my self wholly to God, and left my self in his hands, to exercise me as he thought most fit. Truly (Mr. Doctor) I were by nature of an ingenuous temper, and of an excellent complexion, and of a subtil wit, even as I perceive you are; onely in this I was short of you, that I had not studied the Scriptures, nor skilled them, which I perceive you do; yet notwithstanding I was naturally inclined, with so subtil and sublime an understanding, that as oft as I thought fit to make use of it, I found my self capable and apprehensive of very great and high matters. Hereby once it came to pass, that by reason of the subtilty of my understanding, I began to think thus with my self; certainly thou art naturally endued with so happy a wit & towering understanding, that without all doubt, if thou wouldst seriously & intently make use of it, thou wouldst be apprehensive of some extraordinary & divine matter, concerning even God himself. Which thoughts im-

mediatly after their suggestion, I perceived to be the fallacious Counsel, and pestilence Advice and Suggestion of the Devil: Thereupon I broke out into these words, *O mischievous and malignant Counsellour, What Advice is this that thou hast suggested to me?* Verily, if we had such a God as could be apprehended by reason, I should not value him thus much. After this, one morning when I was ready to read morning Prayers, I had an exceeding vehement desire, insomuch that I brake forth in these words, and said to the Lord; *O most merciful God, if it be thy blessed Will, make me now by experience to feel something, that may transcend and pass all understanding and reason.* But I had no sooner ended these words, but that a vehement horreur possessed me, because that I should dare to desire so great a favour; and therefore again said unto the Lord, *Ah Eternal and ever to be adored Majesty, pardon I beseech thee this my rashness, for it exceedingly repents me, to have done this: And how should it be O Lord, that so miserable an Earth-worm as I am; and no man, should ever find such a thing to enter into his heart, as to dare to desire so transcendent*

scendent

scendent and excellling favour and grace ;  
 when as I know sufficiently, and am con-  
 vinced within my self how vile I am , to  
 how many sins I am prone, and how that  
 through the whole course of my life, I ne-  
 ver as I ought, loved my God, or regar-  
 ded him; but have alwayes made my  
 self by reason of sin, so odious in the eyes  
 of thy glory , that I know very well, that  
 I am unworthy that the earth should bear  
 me ; and therefore since I have presumed  
 to suffer such a desire, of so transcendent  
 grace to arise in me, it is absolutely need-  
 ful, that my body should undergo direful,  
 and suffer bitter things. Having thus said,  
 I strip'd my self, neither did I cease to  
 strike my self with hard stripes, till the  
 blood ran about my shoulders. And so it  
 came to pass , that whilest I was revolving  
 such like thoughts in my heart , and spake  
 such like words even till Sun-rising, upon a  
 sudden an exceeding shining light filled my  
 whole Cell, and in that light I fell into an  
 extasie ; so that for a time I was deprived  
 both of my Reason and Senses. But  
 Oh ! that hour seemed extreemly short  
 unto me. And after I came to my self,  
 I found so exceeding and supernatural im-  
 pression

pression & seal of truth upon me, that I had good reason to say with St. Peter the Apostle, *Lord, it is good for us to be here.* For (believe it) in that short hour I did receive more truth, with more clear light, and certain evidence; more truth (I say) than what either you, Mr. Doctor, or all the Doctors in the world can teach me, even till Dooms-day. But (Mr. Doctor) I suppose I have spoken enough already, as much as concerns your present state and condition.

---

*This*

---



*This following Discourse, shows how the Lord was pleased to Convert by the means of this Layman, a certain Pagan that lived in a far Country. It shews likewise how the Holy Ghost even at this day doth pour forth the same Virtue and Grace, upon minds that he finds apt and well prepared to receive it, that he did upon the Apostles at the day of Pentecost: As also it sheweth, how this Layman did at large explain these things to the Doctor; and how by plain and clear Reasons he proved the Doctor to be a Pharisee, and at last brought him to this, that he resolved fully with himself to take a new course, and amend his life.*

*Doctor.*

**D**EAR Son, if thou hast any thing more to say, I would willingly hear it; for truly I have been much taken with those things which you have hitherto discoursed of. But above all, I intreat you again that you will stay with me, and by no means yet leave

leave me. If you want money to defray your charges, I will willingly supply your want, though I do pawn my Books to take up money : only I desire you by all means to stay with me.

*Layman.* Reverend Sir, I pray God reward you for your proffer'd Courtesie toward me. But I would have you know this, that I stand not in need either of yours, or any other mans Temporal goods, for God Almighty hath made me his Steward, and I have neer five thousand Crowns which are Gods, and I would willingly spend them all whereloever it shall be necessary, or where ever God requireth them at my hands.

*Doctor.* I perceive then, if so, that you are Steward of a very rich and munificent Lord : But I cannot sufficiently admire at what you even now spake : That neither I nor all the Doctors in the World, are able to teach you so much, even between this and Dooms-day, as you have in one hour learned of God. Let me ask you this Question, Did sacred Scripture proceed and flow from the Holy Ghost ?

*Layman.* Yes, they did without all doubt, and so the Catholick Faith teacheth us to believe. But Mr. Doctor, it grieveth



grieveth me that I have said so great things unto you, and that you notwithstanding should talk so childishly. But see you, I will propound one Question to you, and if you can by Scripture or without it resolve me, I promise you I will give you on Gods behalf a thousand Crowns.

*Doctor.* Prethee good Son tell me what Question is that.

*Layman.* I would know of you (Mr. Doctor) whether you can instruct me how I may write a Letter in such a Language, to a certain Pagan living in a far remote Country, that he may be able both to read it, and understand it? and how the form and manner of the Letter may be such, that the same Pagan by the reading of it, may be converted to the Faith?

*Doctor.* Truly (Son) I know not what to say to this; for such kind of works as you are even the works of the Holy Ghost. But I beseech you tell me whether any such thing ever happened unto you, and if you did thereby understand by what means this may be done? or whether you your self were not he that did it?

*Layman.* No Mr. Doctor, it was not I that did it, but the Holy Ghost was pleased to work so by me an unworthy Instrument.

And

And truly much may be said touching this matter, but it were too tedious to rehearse all; for if this whole business should be written, it would even fill a Volume. But I shall tell you a few passages, from whence you may collect the whole matter. There was a certain Pagan, a true hearted honest man, and in his way very just. This man for a long time together did cry unto Heaven, and daily did call upon him, who created both him & all Creatures, and did daily pray after this manner. O God, thou Eternal Creator of all things, behold I am born and bred up in this Country, and in the Faith of it. But I perceive the Jews have another Belief, and likewise the Christians follow another Faith: do thou therefore O Lord, who art over all, and hast made all things, shew unto me I beseech thee by ~~that~~ <sup>what</sup> ever means it pleaseth thee, whether there be any other Faith better or truer than this in which I have been born and bred, that I may believe it; and I will willingly and readily obey thee, by taking upon me that Belief. But if thou shalt refuse to signify thus much unto me, and it shall happen that I die in this Faith because I know no better, surely this will be hard measure. After the Pagan had thus prayed, it came to

pass that a Letter was written unto him from me; which when he had read he was converted unto the Christian Faith. He likewise did write back again a Letter to me, in which he fully shewed how it happened unto him; which Letter I will assure you was so written in our vulgar High Dutch, as I could very well read it. Many things (Mr. Doctor) remains to be spoken concerning this matter, but you have in brief the sum of it.

*Doctor.* Truly God is wonderful in his gifts, and I will assure you (dear Son) these are strange and rare matters which you have told me.

*Layman.* Verily I do enough fear (Mr. Doctor) that I have told you more than was fit for me to tell you. And to say the truth; I do perceive that I have spoken somewhat that doth something trouble you, and go against your stomack. For whereas I am but a Layman, and illiterate, but you a great Dr. of sacred Divinitie; nevertheless I have taken upon me by way of tutoring and teaching, to tell you so many things; it cannot be but this must somewhat offend you.

*Doctor.* Son, if you would not take it ill, I would tell you what doth displease me.

*Layman.*

*Layman.* Assuredly I will not take it ill, you may speak all your mind freely.

*Doctor.* Dear Son, I cannot away with this, but do what I can it goes against my stomach, that you when as you are a Layman, should teach me a Doctor and a Divine; as also that you should call me a Pharisee.

*Layman.* Is there any thing more in me that doth displease you?

*Doctor.* Not the least I assure you, that I know of.

*Layman.* Will you give me leave patiently (Mr. Doctor) to satisfy you in these two things.

*Doctor.* Dear Son, you have not only free leave, but I again and again desire you to do it.

*Layman.* Pray tell me (Mr. Doctor) how it should come to pass, and by whom was it brought about, that the most blessed Virgin *Katherine*, when she was about fourscore years of age, should in discourse and dispute overcome fifty most acute Philosophers, so as they did all most willingly offer themselves to die for Christ? Tell me I say (Mr. Doctor) who was that that did this, or who spake there? That one tender Virgin should overcome so great Philosophers.

*Doctor.*

*Doctor.* No man doubts but that it was the Holy Ghost who did that.

*Layman.* Do you not believe ( Mr. Doctor ) that the Holy Ghost, is as powerful now as he was then?

*Doctor.* Yes I do certainly believe it.

*Layman.* And what hinders then, but that you may also believe, that the same Holy Ghost can speak to you by me a miserable sinner, when as he once deigned to speak by *Caiphas* who also was a sinner. And truly if you so hardly bear those things which I have spoken, hereafter I shall discourse with you more cautiously.

*Doctor.* I entreat you ( Son ) do no so, for I will now correct my self in this matter also.

*Layman.* You said moreover ( Sir ) that this also did somewhat gall you, that I should call you a Pharisee: But when I said so there was then such an account given of it by me to you, that ought fully to have satisfied you. But sith you were not content with that, I shall again with another Reason prove to you, that you are more guilty in that point than I then said. Surely you know ( Mr. Doctor ) that our Saviour doth exhort us in one place, and speaks in this manner;  
*Beware of the Pharisees, for they bind hea-*

## The History of the Life

by burthens and grievous to be born, and lay them upon mens shoulders, but they will not touch them with one of their little fingers. Now consider and reflect upon your self a little: Certainly you did lay upon our shoulders Twenty four Points, or Articles, which you your self will hardly lightly touch. Likewise in another place, our Saviour speaks of the self same *Pharisees*, *All whatsoever they say unto you, that keep and do, but do not after their works, for they say and do not.*

*Doctor.* Those words indeed the Lord spake once.

*Layman.* That's no matter, for he speaks the same yet continually. But see now (Sir) whether you have not given us most excellent Rules and Precepts, which notwithstanding how much you follow in your Life and Conversation, God knows, and you also are not ignorant; and as things stand with you at present, I do willingly follow your Doctrine, but should be very loath to imitate your Life and Conversation: wherefore now I pray judge you your self, whether before God you are not truly a Pharisee; yet not of the number of those false and impious Pharisees that deserve Hell.

*Doctor.* Truly (Son) I have not what



to answer, but confess and acknowledge my self to be a sinner. And now I determine to amend my life, though I should hereby incur the hazard of death. Neither can I any longer defer it, but do again and again entreat and beseech you (Son) that purely for Gods sake you would Counsel me, how I may begin a better life, and that you would also shew me by what means I may attain the highest perfection, which in this life may be attained.

*Layman.* It is very hard (good Sir) let it be spoken under favour, to give you any Counsel in this matter; for your life and manner of conversation which you have hetherto led, and been used to, you have by long custom turned almost into another nature. So that if you should deny and cease from your long accustomed manner and course of life, (which of necessity yett must do) it could not be, without grievous trouble and anguish to your nature; especially sith you are (if I mistake not) about 50 years of age.

*Doctor.* Thereabout indeed (dear Son) I think is my age; But what then? they that came at the eleventh hour had their full wages, and received their penny. And therefore now I am fully resolved and pur-

pos'd in mind (though I were certain thereby to suffer death) from hence forward to turn over a new leaf, to change my course, and to renounce, deny and forsake my old fallacious life (that was onely given to speculation and curiosities of wit) and also to deny all vice, and all manner of sensuality; and endeavour by the grace of God, to order my life for the future after your Advice and Counsel. Wherefore I most earnestly entreat, that laying aside all delay, you would instruct and teach me for Gods sake, how I may begin the reformation and amendment of my life; for I cannot endure it should any longer be deferred or delayed.

*Layman.* Well (honoured Sir) sith there is such grace conferred upon you by God, that you refuse not to humble your self, but are willing to submit your self to a vile poor creature. It concerns us in the first place to give God the honour, due to him. And sith it must be, that I for Gods sake am to give Counsel and Advice to you, I shall humbly seek Gods help; and that I may be the better able, I shall do it from his love, and for the love of him. In the first place, truly I shall begin to teach you after the same manner as they instruct  
Children

Children at School ; that is , I shall commend to you a certain spiritual Alphabet, consisting of 23 Articles or Sentences, so many as there are letters in the Alphabet, with which they begin to teach Children.

*Here followeth a Golden Alphabet, delivered by the Layman to the Doctor, that by it he might begin to mend his life. Frequently to read which, and according to lead our lives, without doubt would be exceeding profitable to us All.*

A Golden Alphabet.

**A** Ttempt in the first place, and set upon a good, pure, and spiritual life, not triflingly or childishly, but stoutly, and with a resolved manly mind.

Both do good, and shun evil, and that carefully and diligently.

Conserve, and keep the most congruous and modest mean in all things.

Diligently learn to bear about with you, both inwardly and outwardly, modesty and humility.

Extirpate and utterly deny for Gods sake your own will, that so you may remain in union with God.

- F Fervently, constantly, and seriously persevere in God.
- G Give your self with joy, simply and studiously to obey, and shew thy self willing and ready without murmuring to all, whatever is of God.
- H Hanker not after, nor look back upon the world.
- I Inwardly accustom thy self to ruminate and meditate in thy heart, upon divine and spiritual matters, and with tears bewail and deplore thy former life.
- K Keep constant guard, and courageously resist the temptations of the Devil, the World, and the Flesh.
- L Leaving behind all temporal things, contend with a cheerful and valiant mind after Eternal.
- M Mind alwayes to preserve a love to God, and your Neighbour.
- N Never covet any mans goods, of what nature soever they be.
- O Orderly make the best of all things, and never turn any thing to the worst.
- P Punishment, and remorse for sin, from whence soever it happen to you, whether from God or from Creatures, take it kindly, and receive it with a submissive mind.
- Q Quietly and heartily forgive all, what ever

ever they be, that have offended you, or done you any injury, in thought, word or deed.

Retain with all possible diligence, thy chastity, both of Body and Soul.

Seriously observe meekness and mildness in all things, and study to be made better by all things.

Take heed that without guile, hypocrisie or fraud, you keep your Word, and observe Faith with all men; and exercise your self in works of charity, both bodily and spiritual, according to your ability.

Vigilantly take heed, neither in eating or in drinking, or any other matter you exceed due measure.

X T S : Life and Doctrine revolve always in your mind, and to the utmost of your power imitate it, and lead your life according to it.

Ymportune the undefiled Virgin-mother with devout Prayers, that she may be assisting to you in the through learning this my Institution.

Zealously accustom your self with severe Discipline, to keep under and bridle your will, and sensual affections; that they mildly yield to what ever God shall do with you, or suffer to happen to you.

*How the Doctor soon, though not without labour, truly learned the Alphabetical Institution: How afterward the Layman taught him a nearer way to perfection. Moreover, how the Doctor was fain to enter upon a dying Life; and therein so long exercised himself, until he had overcome himself.*

*Layman.* GO to now (Mr. Doctor) receive this childish Institution from God, who delivereth the same unto you by me an unworthy sinner,

*Doctor.* To you peradventure (dear Son) this Institution seems but childish; but I confess to you, me thinks, it is sufficiently man-like: but be it what it will be, I am resolved by the grace of God to take upon me the learning of it. But pray tell me, what time will you set me to learn it in.

*Layman.* For the honour of Christs five wounds, which are the signs of his immeasurable love to us, take five weeks, that so you may the more perfectly learn it. In which time you must be your own School-master,



master, and enjoyn your self sharp pen-  
nance, if you mistake and happen to fail  
in any of these Articles, or to do any thing  
contrary to them.

i. whip  
your naked  
shoulders  
with  
Rods.

*Doctor.* I'll follow your Counsel (Son)  
and undergo all your Injunctions.

Now when 3 weeks were near spent in  
this manner of living, the Layman enqui-  
red of the Doctor, how it was with him.  
To whom the Doctor answered, I will  
assure you dear Son, I have in these three  
weeks undergone more and sharper pen-  
nance in the learning of this your Institu-  
tion, than in all the studies of my whole  
life past.

*Layman.* But how is it with you now  
(Mr. Doctor) are you skilful in the Arti-  
cles and Letters of the Alphabet as yet?

*Doctor.* How much soever I be Master of  
it (and by the grace of God, things go well  
enough with me) yet I would willingly  
more perfectly skill it. But moreover,  
I beseech you instruct me further, and shew  
me yet more perfect things.

*Layman.* You very well know Sir, that  
in Schools they never set boyes higher Les-  
sons, till they have well learned their first  
Elements.

*Doctor.* I confesse, then (dear Son) I  
should

should be guilty of a lye, if I should say, I have thoroughly learned your Alphabet.

*Layman.* Therefore it is more advised for us to proceed no further, till you have perfectly learned it.

Afterward, when again about 3 weeks more were spent, the Doctor sent a friend to the Layman, to desire him to step to him, who accordingly presently came; and the Doctor said to him, *O Son rejoice with me, for I suppose now through the grace of God, I am pretty perfect in the Alphabet; and if you please, I will willingly give you an account of it.*

*Layman.* There is no need Sir, that you should so do; for I doubt not of the truth of what you say; and do much congratulate you.

*Master.* Truly Son, with much difficulty have I learned this Institution; but now I beseech you farther to instruct me.

*Layman.* Take it for certain Mr. Doctor, that of my self I cannot farther instruct you, but if it please Almighty God farther by me to instruct you, I hope I shall not be backward to do my best endeavour, and will be a willing, although an unworthy instrument of his, by whom he may do what

what he please ; neither shall I in the least  
advice you to any thing, but what he shall  
give in, and supply me with, & this I will do  
singly, & of the pure love of God, & desire of  
your Salvation. And if it shall happen unto  
you, as it did to the young man in the Go-  
spel, who when he heard the Counsel of our  
Lord, to sell and leave all that he had, went  
away sorrowful ; if (I say) it shall so fall out  
with you, I for my part will be solely  
blameless.

*Doctor.* Let not that (Son) at all trouble  
you, for I am fully resolved in my mind, not  
to regard at all what can in this matter befall  
me ; but purpose to follow and obey Gods  
and your Counsel.

*Layman.* Well (Sir) sith you now are of  
so resolved and ready a mind : I do in the  
first place out of charity and the love of God  
advise you, that by all means you remain  
obedient to your Order, and to all your Su-  
perieurs ; For it cannot be but that if you  
enter upon the right, straight and narrow way,  
you will be grievously oppressed and vexed ;  
and that chiefly by your Order and Bre-  
thren. And when this shall befall you,  
straight-ways your subtile understanding, and  
sensual nature, will be devising many things,  
and urging you to go to the chief Bishop,  
or

or some whither, and find a thousand ways whereby to avoid this Cross. But herein you must take great heed, and rather bear patiently what ever shall happen grievous unto you, and continually persevere in humble obedience; for truly the same way that our Lord shewed unto the fore-named young man, that way must you go, you must take up your Cross upon your shoulders, and follow the Lord and Saviour, and in some measure his example, and that with true, great, and patient humility: Furthermore you must renounce and deny that acute, subtle and pompous understanding, which you have acquired out of the Scriptures. And for a while give over all reading, studying and preaching. And when those that used to make their confessions to you, shall come again unto you to that end, you must shew your self in simplicity; and confession being made, immediately withdraw from them, speaking nothing, nor giving them any counsel, but only saying, I will first learn how I may counsel my self, and when I have well learned so to do, I will be ready to impart advice to you. And if they be inquisitive when you will preach, you may without injury to the truth, simply and nakedly answer, that at the present you

are  
So b  
alien  
I  
is n  
my  
I  
and  
and  
wi  
for  
win  
ter  
sp  
Pa  
co  
H  
y  
ti  
y  
h  
g  
u  
h  
y

are wholly taken up with another business. So by this means you will by little and little, alienate and estrange your self from men.

*Doctor.* If preaching be forbid me, there is nothing then (Son) that I have to employ my self in : what therefore shall I do ?

*Layman.* Betake your self to your Cell, and there perform your hourly Prayers, and as oft as you can, do the same, in Quire with others. Likewise every day, except some just occasion hinder you perform Divine service, and celebrate the Mass. Afterward, what ever time remains, you shall spend it in meditating of the Life, Death, and Passion, and example of Christ; diligently considering how unlike your Life is to His. Here call to mind, and in the bitterness of your Soul, think of the years, and all the time past, in which you have sinfully loved your self, taking notice how little your love hath been to God : and contrary-wise, how great his love hath been to you. Of these things Sir, let your study humbly be, for hereby it may so come to pass, that by degrees you may attain to true humility, and change your old conversation, and antient Custome into a better. Furthermore, when that time shall come, which God well knows; he will on a sudden change you into a new, and another

another man. But before this regeneration can be wrought in you, you must first sell all whatever you possess, and humbly resign all unto God ; Namely, you ought wholly to renounce and deny , all your curiosity and subtilty of your senses, and understanding ; and whatever it be , by which you may acquire honour or delight to your self ; and lastly, all that delight, which hitherto you have possesst in your nature , and in which according to your nature, you have falsely, and inordinately found rest ; and with blessed

*Luk. 7. 10* *Mary Magdalen* humbly cast your self prostrate at the Feet of your Lord. For indeed you must totally dye to all these things fore-mentioned. Now if you shall begin to set upon these things , you will render your self a pleasant, and acceptable spectacle to Almighty God : who indeed cannot behold these things without delight : and it is probable, he will not leave, but will drive and compel you to such tryals as were of old, that you may so much the more be proved, and be thoroughly purified as gold in a furnace ; It may be (I say) he will reach out to you in some measure that cup of love, which he gave to his only begotten Son : which is, that it may so fall out, that whatever you do or leave undone, yea, and your whole



whole course of life may be disesteemed, and despised of all: and those, who have hitherto been wont to confess themselves to you, may stand a far off from you, as one destitute of sense and reason: yes, and all your friends, and a great part of your Brethren, that live with you in your Monastery, may be offended and scandalized at your life, and may say one to the other, that you have taken up a strange and unusual way of life, such as hath almost rendred you a dolt, or fool. Wherefore when as these things shall happen unto you, see Sir that by no means you be terrified, but rather triumph in your God, because your Salvation is nigh. Notwithstanding your frail nature (without doubt) will be something terrified at this; but do you stoutly trust in God, who will by no means forsake you. Furthermore, when you shall be brought into this distress, it can hardly be, but that at sometime or other, it will come into your mind, to ask and desire of God, that he would vouchsafe unto you some supernatural consolation, and make you to taste some sweetness; which when it shall happen to you, be sure such a desire is not from God; but from hence rather, that as yet, there is some pride lurking in your nature. For truly, it is great presumption for any,

any to be so bold, as to ask of God such supernatural Gifts. And therefore if this should befall you, that you should perceive any such desire to arise in you; instantly see your self against it with your whole strength, and suppress it with very great and humble resignation, saying both with heart and voice; *Ah most Merciful God, it doth extremely, and from the bottom of my heart grieve and displease me, and I very much lament, because I perceive so great and high a desire to arise in me; when as I clearly perceive I am altogether unworthy of such great gifts; yea, and unworthy that the Earth should bear me.* And when you shall utter these words with your mouth, although as yet you be not so perfectly sensible in your heart; be not much terrified: but only as oft as such like desires shall arise in you, you must punish your self with Rods. But if neither by such means, such thoughts will cease, then endure them as a temptation, so long as God pleaseth, you should bear them. Finally (worthy Sir) if you resolve to undergo this course of life; you will perceive nothing more profitable to you; then that with a profound and courageous resignation, you humbly commit your self to God in all things, which shall happen to you, whether

whether they be sweet, or whether they be bitter, whether they delight, or whether they torment; so as that you may be able truly to say unto God; *O most Merciful God, and most worthy to be adored, although it were thy Will, that I should remain in this life, and in this heavy pressure even till the last day of Judgment; yet I would by no means forsake thee, but constantly and ever adhere, and cleave to thee.* Verily Sir, I sufficiently in the Grace of God understand, that this thought now is in your heart, that you may justly inwardly say to your self, that what ever hath hitherto been spoken by me, is extream hard and difficult. And therefore I before made this protestation, If it shall happen that you start aside from what is proposed to you, (as did that Young man fore-mentioned) then I will be free from all blame.

*Master.* It is (dear Son) very true, which you say; and moreover this your last speech seems to me yet more hard.

*Layman.* And yet Sir, you intreated me, to shew you the nearest way to the highest perfection attainable in this life. And truly, I know no way more secure, then that, which leads to the imitation of the example of the most Holy Humanity of Christ. Wherefore

Wherefore I sincerely advice you, to take sufficient time of consideration, and betake your self into your self; and whatever by Divine inspiration you shall understand, ought to be done by you, that, you may safely set upon.

*Master.* I like well (Son) your counsel, and intend to follow it: and as I shall be able, I will take heed by the assistance of Divine Grace to overcome my self.

*What afterwards befel the Doctor.*

*How he endured grievous pressures in his nature, and underwent the contempt of men, insomuch that his strength began to fail him.*

**A**Bout eight dayes after, the Doctor sent a certain Messenger to the Layick, to desire him to come to him; And when he was come, the Master said to him: Ah most dear son, it can hardly be uttered, what fightings, what grief, what strife, and contention, I have inwardly undergone both night and day, before with Gods assistance, I could so far attain, as that I might overcome the Devil, the Flesh, and my own Nature. But now through the Grace of  
God

God I have obtained an undanted, and ready mind, and also a true and perfect will; so that I will chearfully (God assisting) enter upon that way, which you have taught me: and although (likely) it will be very troublesome to my Nature, yet that ought patiently to be endured, neither shall I for that cause draw back, but will through the Grace of God persevere steady and constant in this purposed course.

*Layman.* Do you keep still in your memory (Doctor) those Words which I lately spake to you?

*Master.* Immediately after you left me, I carefully wrote them all down.

*Layman.* I congratulate to you Sir, & heartily rejoyce with you, that you have obtained so ready, so vigorous, and so undanted a mind; neither do I in this less wish well to you, than I do to my self. Therefore now safely in the Name of God begin, and behave your self manlike. And so taking his leave, the Layick departed.

Now the Doctor obeying the instructions, and counsel of the Layick, presently set upon the work: And forthwith forbore every thing, that he was required to forbear. In so much, that before a year was come about, he was as much had in con-

tempt by all, that lived with him in the Monastery, as he was before had in esteem, and honour; yea, and his special friends, and as many (whether men or women) as were wont to confess themselves to him; finally, all that knew him, and respected him, became so estranged from him, as if they had never seen him: which was not a little troublesome and contrary to his nature. Moreover, he began to feel much infirmity and weakness in his head, which struck him with greater terrour, than all the rest. Wherefore by a Messenger he sent for the Layman, and declared to him, all that had befallen him, and how that his natural strength began to fail: but chiefly how he was not a little distressed, by reason of the infirmity of his head. The Layman made him this answer. Be not terrified Sir, but humbly resign your self to God, and put your trust firmly in him. Truly, I hitherto well am pleased, and like matters, as they stand with you; and indeed things are very well with you, and will be better without doubt; you well know; that he that will find the right Way, and walk therein, must through some sufferings at least, and afflictions, follow the example of Truth it self; namely, our Saviour Christ.

There-



Therefore in the least be not terrified at all, but leave your self totally to God; for it thus heretofore befel me likewise. Notwithstanding in the mean time, whilst this infirmity is upon you, you may discreetly succour your Nature, by the use of better meat. I had made for me, when I were in the like infirmity, a certain confession of Aromaticall drugs, which did comfort my head; and the like I'll get made for you. But this is certain, that I alwayes left my self totally to God, to do with my Soul or Body what he pleased.

*Master.* But now you teach me other-ways, & advise me to relieve & succour my self with better meat, in this my infirmity.

*Layman.* No man ought Sir to tempt God; so long as you continue in this weakness, God doth freely permit you to help and comfort your nature, & especially your head. Go to now Sir, & with Divine assistance go on as you have begun, joyfully resign up your self to God in all things, with true & deep humility. Put your trust in God, and wait for his grace, and whatever he then requires of you, whether it be sweet, or whether it be bitter, be sure to the utmost of your strength to yield him obedience. As for my part, I pray you for Gods sake, take it not ill,

that I can no longer at this time abide with you. For a weighty business, compels me at this time to bid you fare-well. But if you cannot spare me altogether, send some body to that place, and there I'll be found. But it would be far better for you, if you could go on without the comfort of any mortal creature.

*Master.* Do not (I beseech you dear Son) say so; for indeed I cannot long want you. And truly it afflicts me much, and fills my mind with vehement anguish, because you now will depart from me. But sith, as you say, so weighty a business, and which concerns God, compels you to be gone; I will content, and resign my self, and bear your absence as well as I may.

*Layman.* Now therefore Sir, sith you are brought under the Rod, and scourge of the Lord, to which also you have offered your self willingly, it concerns you very much to lead your life discreetly. Be careful therefore to give your self your just due. And let it not disturb you, that you are forsaken by Creatures. But if you should want money, pawn some of your Books, and borrow upon them; but take heed that you sell not one of them. For if I be not mistaken, the time will come, when they will

will be all necessary to you. Having thus said, the Layman bidding the Doctor fare-well, departed; the Doctor in the mean time weeping for his departure, and commending himself to God.

*How the Doctor was wonderfully visited, touched, and illuminated by God: and how the Layman returned to him again, and meekly exhorted him, that he should again take upon him the care of Preaching, which for some time had been omitted.*

**W**hen as now the Doctor had for 2. years together continued in most grievous temptations, together with the great contempt of all his Friends and extream poverty, insomuch that he was compelled to borrow money, upon some of his Books, which he pawned; and also had undergone with much humility the grievous weakness of his whole nature: It came to pass that night, which immediately goes before the day celebrated for the Conversion of St. Paul, that a most grievous Temptation rushed upon him, such as the heart of man cannot

*The History of the Life*

imagine, whereby he conceived such a great  
 weakness of his whole nature, that that night  
 he was not able to go forth to Morning-  
 Prayer, but abode sitting in his Cell, re-  
 signing himself from the bottom of his  
 heart to God, with huge and true humility,  
 being destitute of all help and comfort from  
 any mortal Creature whatever. And whilest  
 he was kept in this weakness, he began a-  
 mongst other things to meditate on the pas-  
 sion of our Lord Jesus Christ, thinking with  
 himself, with what infinite love Jesus  
 Christ did follow him; and contrariwise,  
 he reflecting upon his own life, perceiving  
 how unconsiderable his life was, if compared  
 with the Life of Christ, and how as nothing  
 his life was, compared with the immense  
 charity of Christ. Great contrition, and  
 sorrow for all his sins, and for all his ill  
 spent and lost time, ceased upon him. So  
 that with his whole affection, with heart  
 and voice he said to the Lord: *Ah! mer-  
 ciful and compassionate Lord God, have mer-  
 cy, have mercy upon me for the abiss of thy  
 mercies sake, because I am not worthy that  
 the earth should bear me.* Whilest these  
 words were in his heart and mouth, being  
 broad awake, he heard with his bodily  
 ears (yet seeing nothing) a voice saying  
 unto

unto him. *Now receive thy peace, and put thy trust in God; and take it for certain, that when he lived upon earth, that whatsoever sick person he cured in body, the same he likewise healed in Soul.* Which words being ended, instantly the Doctor fell into an extasie, and was deprived of all rational understanding, insomuch that he knew not what was done unto him, where he was, or whither he was snatch'd. But after that he was restored to himself, he found in himself in his whole nature, a new and great power, and vigour; such as he confessed he had never in all his whole life time felt by experience before; as also so clear and enlightened a discerning, or illuminated reason, as never was in the least known to him before that time. But being amazed, he wondred with himself, from whence these things should so suddenly happen unto him, and began to think thus with himself. Certainly thou wilt never be able to clear up this matter of thy self, send therefore for thy Friend to come unto thee, and lay open the whole matter in order unto him. And so he did. The Layman being sent for, readily obeyed the Doctor, came to him forthwith; the Doctor told him every thing in order, as it happened unto him; which

when the Layman had heard, he said. How gladly, even with my whole heart Sir, do I hear this news. I know that you have first now truly experienced the true grace of God, and are now first touched in the superior powers of your mind. Know also, that as heretofore the Letter killed you, so now the same will quicken you, because all the holy Scripture proceeded and flowed from the holy Ghost. Neither doubt Sir, but the knowledge of the holy Scripture will for the future very much profit you now that you have been found worthy to be illuminated by the light of the holy Ghost. For many things now will be made manifest to you by the Scriptures, which were altogether unknown to you before. For you know, that the holy Scripture seemed to you, and many other Theologists, to be contrary to it self in many places. But he who rightly knows how to look into it, in the light of the holy Spirit (as you hence-forward will be able to do) such a one doth plainly know, how that it agreeth with it self throughout. Wherefore now you will begin wisely to understand Scripture, and rightly to follow the true Pattern and Exemplar of Truth, our Lord Jesus Christ. Now also you must again take upon you the care of Preaching,

Pre  
inter  
edif  
now  
fetc  
rea  
tain  
wil  
hun  
sh  
an  
be  
W  
fl  
b  
m  
k  
h  
p



Preaching, which for some time hath been intermitted; that by the Word you may edifie and instruct your Neighbours. And now the time is come also, that you must fetch home your Books again, and fall to reading, and perusing them. And be certain, that hereafter, one Sermon of yours will be more profitable and fruitful, than a hundred of your former; for those that shall hear you hereafter, will be profited and amended far more, than they have been heretofore; and that, because the Word which you shall hereafter utter, will flow from a clean vessel, and therefore will be very grateful and acceptable to a clean mind, and a lover of God. Furthermore, know this that as heretofore you have been by many accounted contemptible, and appeared to them dispicable; so now you will appear to them all, an hundred times more amiable, and be more acceptable than ever heretofore. And now multitudes of people will begin to flock together to hear you; so that it will for this cause be exceeding good for you, to keep your self very humble, and more carefully to watch over your self. For as you know, he that hath any great Treasure, hath the more need carefully to guard them from Robbers. And certainly,

ly, those hellish Robbers, the evil spirits are very much affrighted and always terrified, as often as they perceive that God Almighty hath bestow'd upon any man so great a treasure. And therefore be sure, they will turn every stone, and make use of all their strength and cunning, to steal from you, or rob you of this Treasure. Therefore it exceedingly concerns you to keep it with all care and vigilancy. But you will be able, by no means better to preserve it, then by a silent, true and profound humility. Finally, as things are with you, there is no more need that for the future, I should converse with you, as an instructor of you; No verily, I now exceedingly desire to be taught by you, and intend here to remain so long, till I have heard diverse of your Sermons. And because (as you have acknowledged) you have felt and experienced a certain great power, and such as is understood both in Nature and Grace; I very much desire, if the Lord permit that you would again Preach.

*Master.* What advice therefore do you give me, (dearest Son) for I have pawned several of my Books, and have taken up upon them, no less then thirty Crowns.

*Layman.* Send some body for them, and I on (Gods behalf) will redeem them, and will

will give thee so many Crowns ; and if after you have redeemed your Books, any thing shall remain, you shall restore it to God : so the Books were brought and redeemed.

After these things, the Doctor caused it to be given out, and spread abroad, that upon the third day after he intended to Preach; which when it was heard, every body much wondered; and because of the novelty of the thing, a huge multitude of People came together. The Doctor therefore when he was come, and saw so many People come together, got up into the Pulpit, and covering his Eyes with his hood, he thus prayed to himself, *O Merciful God, if it may be pleasing to thee, grant I may so speak and do, as that thy most acceptable will may be done in me.* Presently after he had spoken these Words, a pang of weeping without any endeavour of his, fell upon him, & he shed many most sweet Tears ; which continued so long, that the People began to be weary of so tedious expectation, So that one of the crowd ; said with a loud voyce ; How long (I pray Sir) do you intend to keep us ? Now it grows late, and if you will not begin, say so, that we may rise and go home. And when the Doctor himself did take notice, that the time was nigh past ; he said again unto the Lord.

*Ab*

*Oh Merciful Lord my God, if it be thy will  
 stop these Tears, and grant I may Preach  
 this Sermon ! Which thing if thou deny me,  
 I fear that thou judgest, I have not yet  
 been sufficiently derided, notwithstanding  
 fullfil in me all thy good pleasure according  
 to thy will. But whatever he said, or what-  
 ever he pray'd, he nothing at all availed : but  
 his Tears rather more prevailed. Perceiving  
 therefore that it was the Divine will & plea-  
 sure ; he said to the People weeping. Truly  
 beloved, it sufficiently grieves me that you  
 have been so long in expectation. But so it is,  
 that I cannot at this time bring forth one  
 Word. When the People heard this, they  
 arose and went their way. And straight-  
 way the fame of this passage spread it self  
 through the whole City ; So that then again,  
 the Doctor began to be laugh'd at, and to  
 be had in contempt ; every one saying ; See  
 now we perceive as clear as none-day, that  
 he is stark mad, and deprived of his Reason  
 and Sences. Whereupon his Brethren did  
 severely and solemnly suspend him from his  
 Office of Preaching, telling him that he  
 brought upon them no small damage and  
 shame, since by his singular and unusual  
 manner of living, he had weakened his brain.  
 Among these troubles, the Doctor sent for  
 the*

the Layman, and told him in order all that had befallen him. The Layman answered him; Be of good courage (worthy Sir) neither let any terror take hold of you: it is certain your affairs were never in so good plight as now they are; for the Omnipotent God will have you wholly to be his friend. And therefore it is probable, that till then something of pride lay hid in your mind, which now God hath mortified in you; when being set up in a high place, after the Example of Christ, you were derided by men. And truly you ought with a willing mind to accept so great a Gift of God; for be confident, what remainder of sin lay hid in you, is now wholly abolished and cast out. Wherefore Sir, be of good courage, and humbly bear with patience this your humiliation. Neither let this seem to you a new and unusual matter, for I have also known the like befall others. And take heed that you do in no wise condemn this burden of the Cross, which the Lord hath sent you. But be advised by me, to retire your self from all humane converse, for this five days, in honour of the five Wounds of Christ. Afterwards you may speak with your Pryor, and peradventure he will permit you to Preach in some Monastery. But if he shall deny you, entreat him

him that he would first make tryal of you, and give you leave once in your Covent, to read a Lecture to your Brethren. To all which words of the Layman, the Doctor yielded obedience willingly; five days being spent, and leave being asked and obtained of the Pryor; The Doctor read so excellent a Lecture to his Brethren, that they did all exceedingly admire his excellent, Spiritual and Divine Doctrine. So that presently it was concluded by them all in the Chapter-house, that they would make tryal of him once more, granting him leave once more to Preach to the People. Wherefore they gave order to one of the Brothers, who was to Preach in a certain Covent, that after Sermon he give notice to the People, that the Doctor intended the next day to Preach in that place. Therefore that Brother, after he had ended his Sermon, said to the People, I am commanded to give you notice, that to morrow in the forenone in this Place, the Doctor intends to Preach. But if any thing besal him like that which lately happened to him, impute it in no wise to me, seeing I do but what I am commanded. Yet take this for certain, that lately he read to us in our Covent, such a Lecture, so Excellent, so Divine, Profound and



and Spiritual, that many of our fraternity dare say, they have not these many years heard so Divine and Heavenly Doctrine. But what he will do before you I know not. The next day after the Doctor went to the Monastery appointed (it was a Monastery of Virgins;) And when he was thither come, he began his Sermon as followeth.

*A Rare and Devout Sermon, which the Doctor Preached in a certain Monastery after his Illumination, concerning Christ the true Bridegroom of the Soul: and how the Soul ought to follow him in True, Modest, Humble and Patient Resignation: and how Christ doth first divers wayes prove the Soul, and at last graciously receiveth it. This Sermon may not unfitly be Preached upon the Festival of some Virgine.*

Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go you forth to meet him, *Ma. 25.*

**I**T is now two years ago (if I be not deceived Dearly Beloved) since I last Preached

Preached unto you; and in that my last Sermon, I delivered to you 24 Particulars, or Articles. And as you may remember, it was my usual custom at that time, to mingle many Latine Words and Sentences in my Sermons, which for the future I shall in no wise do. But when I have a mind to use the Latine tongue, I will do it amongst those who are skilful in that Language, and can understand what I have to say. But now for the obtaining of Divine grace and assistance, let us say over the Angels Salutation.

The Verse which I have pitched upon for my Text (Dearly Beloved) and to which I shall confine my self throughout my whole discourse, is this: *Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go you forth to meet him.*

The Bridegroom, is Christ Jesus; the the Spouse, is humane nature. We therefore all (Dearly Beloved) are called Spouses of Christ, and we ought therefore in duty to go forth to meet him. But alas! the fault is on our part. For the true Wayes and right Pathes, which lead to meet the Bridegroom, are become very deart and overgrown: And we, alas! do little take notice of them, and too seldom and very rarely

rarely now adayes is any one found, that  
entred into those Pathes. But there are  
many other Roads, in which multitudes go  
astray. So that rarely do any now arise  
and go forth to meet the Bridegroom, as I  
shall God willing hereafter shew you.  
But now, least I should be too tedious, I  
will in silence pass over. But whereas we  
are all called Spouses, I must first lay open  
what becometh every Spouse to do, that she  
may go forth to meet her Bridegroom.  
First therefore, it is the duty of every faith-  
ful Spouse, to be bashful and modest, and  
to avoid all things that may offend her  
Bridegroom; as for example, such as the  
vain glory of this fallacious and ill-reward-  
ing world, pride, envy, and other common  
sins of the world: Also, all the pleasures  
of corrupt nature, whether it be in profit  
or idleness, or in any other things whatever,  
but what are upon a true and rational ac-  
count necessary. And when the Spouse  
hath rejected such and the like things for  
the love of her Bridegroom, then she  
beginneth somewhat to please her Bride-  
groom. Secondly, If thou wilt yet more  
please him, she must humbly bow and in-  
cline her self, and offer up her whole self

## The History of the Life

unto him, saying both with heart and voice, *Oh most sweet Lord and Bridegroom, thou knowest the hearts of all; therefore I do with my whole heart profess unto thee, that I will freely and with a willing mind do all whatever I shall know or be able, which thou teaching me, I shall see to be acceptable and pleasing to thee, neither will I ever depart from thee, but perpetually and with all my might cleave unto thee.* When therefore the Spouse hath thus bethrothed her self, the Bridegroom now turning his face, to her begins to behold her, and commands that some rich Jewel be given her; you will ask me what Jewel? I answer, such an one as this, namely, That she be suffered to be exercised both inwardly & outwardly with divers temptations, as his manner is to do with all his singular and choice Friends. Then it falls out, that if the Spouse be yet somewhat tender and delicate, she strait addresses her self to her Bridegroom, saying. *Oh my most merciful Lord, these are exceeding strange and unusual things, and too too heavy, such as I never felt the like, and they make me greatly fear, how I shall be able to bear them, and subsist under them. Wherefore I earnestly entreat thee, most dear Lord, to*

take

take off this burden, and free me of it. The Bridegroom answereth her: Tell me my beloved Spouse, doth it seem equitable to you, that the Spouse should fare better then her Bridegroom, thou must first of necessity in some measure follow him. And certainly it is altogether comely, just and also tollerable; that the Spouse should endure something, at least for the love of her Bridegroom. When this the pleasure of the Bridegroom is made known, the Spouse is stricken with terrour, and trembling, saith to the Bridegroom. *Oh! my Lord and Bridegroom, I beseech you be not angry with me; for I am now ready to obey thee;* Therefore suffer what thou pleatest to fall upon me, I will through the assistance of thy grace bear all for thy sake, willingly and contentedly. When the Bridegroom hears this, he conceives a greater love to his Spouse. And therefore bestows upon her yet a more excellent gift, namely, that all her performances, exercises, wayes, and all her works, yea, and at least whatever she does or leaves undone, although they be all good in themselves, yet they seem to her self wholly unfavoury. Furthermore, she accounts her whole time lost, whatever she spends it about, though that which she doth

be good; and that in all she offends the Bridegroom, and continually fears that after this life she shall suffer grievous punishment for all. Furthermore, this gift is granted her, that she be had in derision by most, and that her whole life and conversation, as meer folly be vilified and set at naught by men. But by this means the Spouse becomes much weakned in her nature; so that she thinks every hour she shall dye no other death. And whereas she is yet tender, faint-hearted, and fearful, she is exceeding terrified. Wherefore she earnestly calls upon her Bridegroom, saying, Why is it most sweet Bridegroom, that thou leavest me in this sad condition, when thou notwithstanding knowest full well that I cannot possibly undergo it, but it will cost me my life. The Bridegroom answers her, Why how now my chosen Spouse, if thou wilt go forth to meet the Bridegroom, it is equitable and congruous, that thou shouldst at least in some things at first follow him, and travail part of the journey he went. Whereas therefore the Bridegroom suffered death for the love of his Bride, and endured most direful torments, and innumerable pains 33 years, think you it not congruous to reason, and every way fitting, that the Spouse


also



also out of love should endure some hazard of death. Certainly, if your love were great & faithful toward your Bridegroom, it would easily shut out all such fear from you. The Spouse fearing, such or the like, answers from the Bridegroom, is ceased upon with exceeding great fear and shame: and speaks thus from her most inward bowels, with heart and mouth to her Bridegroom. Now most loving Bridegroom, I fully understand that I have done unjustly and evilly: and I am even overcome with fear, and do grieve truly with my whole heart; because I have not resigned my self faithfully unto thee, even unto death. And behold, hence-forward I commit my whole self to thee; That whatever thy will and pleasure is, the same may be mine, whether it be sweet or whether it be bitter, whether it be health or whether it be sickness, whether death or life, or whatever it be that thy pleasure is shall come upon me, shall be welcome to me. And so for the future, I wholly renounce my own will; and so surrender and offer it up to thee, as never-more hereafter to re-call it or desire it.

Thou also most merciful Bridegroom, do with me a sinful wretch, whatever thou wilt, both in Time and in Eternity. For as

*The History of the Life*

much as of me is, I plainly understand that I am unworthy that the earth should bear me. When now the Bridegroom perceives so resolved, so constant & perfect a will in his Spouse; What do you think he doth to his Spouse? Even this,  hath mercy on her; but how you will ask? Why thus? He will then first reach out to her an excellent and glorious Cup, namely this, That over and above all the pressures, temptations and straights in which already she is held, he permits that far more, and far more grievous then ever she suffered before to fall upon her. The Spouse by this time understanding this to be the pleasure of her Bridegroom, suffers all willingly and freely, for the love of him. And bowing her self humbly to her Lord, saith; Even thus most dear Bridegroom is it most fitting and meet, that not what I will thou shouldst will, but what thy Will and Pleasure is that I should will. Wherefore for thy sake, I will freely and with a willing mind take off this Cup, and receive this gift of thine, let it torture and afflict my nature as much as it will; nevertheless, I accept of it as at thy hand. Whilest therefore the Bridegroom in his Eternal Wisdom beholds this will and resolution in his Spouse; she is rendred above  
measure

measure dear unto him. So that even out of superabundant love, he permits her to suffer through her whole nature by the said Cup of precious affliction given unto her, until she be thoroughly purged and cleansed from all her spots, sins, and imperfections. But then he saith unto her. Arise now my beautiful and comely Spouse, for now thou art all fair, and there is no spot in thee; and withall looks upon her so amiably, and kindly, as is far above all Expression.

After this the Eternal Father of the Bridegroom cometh also to the nuptials, and joyfully saith to them: Arise quickly make haste. It is time that they be led to the Temple, and joyned together in a marriage league. And taking both the Bridegroom, and the Bride, leads them both together to the Temple, and joyns them mutually to himself, and with so strong and great a mutual nuptial love doth couple and bind them one to the other; that neither in time, nor in eternity can they ever more be put asunder, or separated one from the other. Now whilst these nuptials are celebrating, the Son the Bridegroom saith to his Father; Eternal and most loving Father, whom will it please you, shall be our Cup-bearer, and Comptroller of our nuptial Feasts? The Father made an-

swer, and said : This office and business belongs to the Holy Ghost, and he shall be the Governour of the Feast that day. Presently without any delay, that Magnificent, Highest, and Most adorable Cup-bearer gives the Spouse to drink, and take off such an overflowing Cup of Love, that she is wholly overflowed, and drowned in Charity; and altogether flows forth, and is dissolved, and melted into her Bridegroom. And falling into an Exstasie, she becomes so drunk even with over much Love, that she looseth and forgetteth her self, and all other Creatures, both such as are in time, and such as are in Eternity. For truly (beloved) whoever attaineth to these nuptials, the same then first is arrived at the very true solemnity of joys indeed, and of Eternal nuptials. And whosoever is made such a Spouse, such a one is become a true Worshipper; adoring the Father in Spirit and Truth: and the same hath found peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. For verily in these nuptials there is joy upon joy: as also there the peace is greater, and Triumphant joy more abundant in one hour, then all Creatures whether in time, or in Eternity can make. For the joy, which the Spouse here takes in her Bridegroom, and receives from him, is such, and so great, that

no Reason, no Sense can possibly understand it, attain to it, or be capable of it. At these words, One cryed out with a loud voyce: It is true, it is true, it is true. And immediatly fell to the Earth, as if he had been dead. At which sight, a certain Woman spake aloud to the Doctor; give over Master Doctor, or else this man will give up the Ghost in our arms. The Doctor answered? Well dearly beloved, if it seems good to the Bridegroom to take away with him this Spouse, we ought willingly to leave her to him. But be ye silent a little while, for I shall even now make an end.

Let us all (I beseech you, dearly beloved) let us all with one consent lift up our voyces unto Heaven, unto the Lord, imploring his mercy. For truly, it is a thing extreamly to be bewailed by us, that we should be made such Fools, so dull, and sottish; as that, notwithstanding we are none of us ignorant, how we are all called the Spouses of God; yet scarce one of us, or very rarely, hath the courage to hazard his Nature, in manfully following the Bridegroom, until he be found worthy to be made partaker, and taste by experience somewhat at least of the wonderfull and most pleasant solemnization, of these supream Triumphs, and most happy nuptials.

Verily,

Verily, in these latter times there are but few such found, as do in truth go forth to meet the Bridegroom; such, as of old time there were many. Wherefore it exceedingly concerns every one, to examine, and seriously and diligently to try himself; and to have a vigilant care of himself: For now the time draws near, and is even at the door, when the greatest part of men will indeed have Eyes, and yet see not, and Ears, and yet hear not.

Wherefore now, my dearly beloved, come on, let us all do our utmost endeavour to come to the experiencing of these most pleasant, & even too too happy nuptials. ~~But~~ that I may pursue my purpose, & come to a conclusion; After that the Bridegroom and the Bride are gone asunder, & withdrawn each from other, & the Bride again coming to her self, perceives that she is yet left in this time of exile, she saith to her self; Ah me miserable wretch, am I here again? And begins to be somewhat sad. But she is now so modest, so sunk into the depth of humility, and finally so perfectly, and fundamentally resigned to her Bridegroom, that she durst in no measure think of the injoying, or desiring his company, for she very well knows, that she is altogether unworthy of it. Notwithstanding  
the



the Bridegroom neglects not ever now and then to have an Eye upon his fair beloved, and dearest Bride, knowing full well that none can comfort her but himself. And now in the winding up of my Discourse, let me give you this caution (dearly Beloved.) Let it not seem strange unto you, what I have said unto you touching the Discourse, which the Bridegroom and the Bride have with one another. Certainly no man can believe, except he have had experience of it; what strange kind, and unheard of Discourses the Bride hath with the Bridegroom; Nevertheless the Holy Scriptures also oft make mention, how a loving and devoted Soul Discourses with the Bridegroom, and in such a manner, that her words hardly will bear sense with them. Which also sometimes happens even at this day; namely, that the Bride useth such expressions to the Bridegroom, that if any one heard them, he would certainly say, she were either drunk or mad. But I fear (Beloved) I am too tedious.

God therefore and our Lord Jesus Christ the true Bridegroom grant, that we may be all made his true Spouses, and be able to go forth to meet him in true and great Humility, and deep and perfect resignation of our  
selves

selves to him, to the Praise and Glory of the Almighty God. *Amen.*

*Of certain wonderful Things, which befel some upon the Hearing the foregoing Sermon, which afterwards were understood. From whence we may take notice, How great things God worketh by fit Instruments; namely, by the Sermon of any one Illuminated Mans, much more then by the Sermons of an hundred others.*

**T**HIS Sermon being ended, the Master went into the Temple, dispatched Divine Service, and administered the Holy Sacrament of the Lords Body to very many good men. But in the Garden of the Monastery, there remained sitting above fourty men. Which thing the Layman had taken notice off. And when the Sacrament was ended, coming to the Doctor, he told him of it: and taking him with him, led him to the place, where he might see it. But in the mean time, whilst the Master was administering the Sacrament, all were risen, except twelve, whom they found sitting there still.

When

When the Master saw this, he said to the Layman : Dear Son, what shall we do to these men ? Then the Layman went to them, and touched, and jogged them one by one, but they felt nothing, and seemed to be no otherwise then dead. At which the Master did not a little wonder, for he had never seen any such thing in the least before. And saith again to the Layman ; Think you Son that these men are dead ? The Layman smiling said, if they be dead, it is the fault of you, and the Bridegroom.

*Master.* If the Bridegroom have a hand with me in the business, we shall easily find a Remedy for this evil.

*Layman.* You need not at all doubt Sir, but that all these men shall live yet in time ; and I could wish, that you would speak to the Holy Virgins of this Monastery, that they would cause them to be carryed within the first Cloisters of their Monastery, to some warm place, least by reason of the damp ground they should catch harm. Accordingly it was done ; the Virgins very modestly commanding them to be carried into warm Rooms : and they told the Doctor, that they also had one of their Sisters rapped into an extasie, and lying upon her Bed, whither they had carryed her as one dead.

dead. The Master answered them, I beseech you (Beloved) be not troubled at this thing; but when any of them comes to themselves, give them (if they will take it) some kind of warm broth. The Virgins answered him, That they would willingly do. And so the Doctor together with the Layman departed, and went together to the Doctors Cell: Where the Layman said to the Doctor. What think you, Reverend Sir, did ever the like matter befall you since you were born? you see now, what great things God doth work by a fit Instrument. And I doubt not, but very many more will be sensible of this your Sermon, and what was done at it: For they will tell one another. Wherefore I shall like it well, if you please, that you would suffer these your weak Sons and Daughters to rest a while. For truly, this Sermon will find them work enough for a long time. But I verily think many would reap much benefit, if you would likewise (God permitting) Preach to the secular men. For now during this time of Lent, they will more readily run to Sermons. And I believe, very many will flock together the more, because of this Sermon, which you preached to day.

*Master.* If you advice me to it ( dear Son).

Son) I will willingly follow your counsel. And ( as I remember ) this next Sabbath day, is the Feast of the Virgin ~~the~~ <sup>St</sup> Gaytrude.

*Layman.* And pray what is the Gospel appointed for that day ?

*Master.* It is concerning the Woman taken in adultery, and brought to Christ. But whatever the Gospel be for that day, I intend not to stick only to that; But will easily take from thence some sentence or other, which shall be the scope of my whole Sermon; and from it I will take occasion as Divine Grace shall assist me, to set before Mens Eyes their sins and Iniquities. Neither do I much care, what becomes of me for so doing. Though I easily believe that first this will be my portion; my Brethren will do what they can to expel me out of the Monastery; for I am resolved neither to flatter them, nor any body else: but will simply speak the naked truth, as the Lord shall enable me: neither will I balk that, though I should be therefore to suffer death.

*Layman.* Truly ( I believe Sir ) for these two or three hundred years, or more by past, there hath not been so much need, to speak the naked Truth simply and seriously, as now in these our days. Wherefore be not at all moved

moved with whatever can happen. For if you be not suffered to abide here, you may be some where else : and wheresoever you be, God will in no wise forsake you. The Master therefore gave order to one, that at the end of his Sermon he should give notice to the People, that he intended to Preach the next Sabbath-day, which was consecrated to St. *Gartrude*. When that day came, a very great multitude of Men of divers ranks came together, to hear the Doctors Sermon. Who coming at the time appointed ; Thus began his Discourse.

*A Sermon of the Doctors Preached to the People, in which he sharply reproveth Sin.*

**W**Hat shall I say, or where shall I begin my Discourse (Dearly Beloved) seeing 'tis obvious to every Eye, how ill it is with us in many things, and unless we amend our Lives, undoubtedly things will grow worse, and worse, and more dangerous ? But before I enter upon my Discourse, I earnestly beg this of you all ; that none of you would take that grievously, which I shall say unto you. For truly, it is more needful at this time to speak the Truth plainly,



plainly, and openly, then it hath been any time these two or three hundred years, or upwards. Whereupon I have resolved with my self to reprove the Faults of us all in general, and not at all to flatter any man; but without any daubing, obscure glosses, or comments, to speak simply and nakedly, whatever the Lord shall teach, or suggest to me: being ready for the Love of God, to undergo any thing that shall be laid upon me for this cause. But if I shall be hindred by the shortness of the time, to finish now what I have to say, I shall at another time (if liberty be granted me) make an end of it. Truly, I have purposed to handle so many things in this Sermon, that I will neither meddle with the Gospel for the day, nor speak any thing of blessed *Gartrude*, to whom the day is consecrated, nor mingle any Latine sentences in my Discourse, that so I may have the longer time to speak what I intend. I have only taken for my Text a Verse or two out of this days Gospel, upon which I will only insist. The Words are these;

*The Pharisees bringing a Woman taken in Adultery to our Lord, set her in the midst, and accused her, that she ought to be stoned; The Lord said unto them, He that is without Sin among you, let him cast the first stone.*

G

When

When they heard this, they went one after another out of the Temple. Verily (Beloved) if in these our days, our Lord Jesus Christ should speak the same Words to us Christians; I verily believe, very few of us could remain behind, who ought not to go forth. And least whilst I am reproving others for their faults, I should seem to pass by my own, and the sins of our Order; I will begin with my self, and my Brethren, the Preachers and Confessors. How many think you of us, would stay behind upon these Words of our Saviour, who being conscious to themselves of no sin, would not be compelled to go forth? Truly we are called, and accounted poor, and live upon the Patrimony of the Crucifix, that is, upon the Almes of the faithful. But how worthily in all things we answer this our calling, the Lord knows, and the Devil knows. Truly I fear there are very few among us, who in hearing confessions do purely love God, and aim at his Glory: Of which thing this is an evident Argument, that for the most part, we are more ready to hear the confessions of the Rich, than of the Poor. And that this is so, is plain by this. If any such of us be taking the confession of any Poor man; and word be brought us that such a Lord, or  
such

such a Lady is come, we presently arise in  
hast, and dismissing the Poor man, hie us  
away to my Lord, or to my Lady. And  
why is this? but because we are covetous,  
and love honour, and are tickled, if we can  
make our braggs, that more Lords and La-  
dies make their confessions to us, then to  
others: in the mean time we make mention  
of the Poor Saints. But how, and in what  
manner we behave our selves towards those  
Rich ones, God the righteous Judge  
knoweth. Certainly it is our duty to teach  
them the way of Truth, and uprightness, and  
in what manner they ought to lead their  
lives; and not, when they desire to have  
their wicked and unlawful customes in-  
dulged, and permitted, to frame and invent  
many subtil Glosses, and shifts, and tell them  
their leud customs are not repugnant to the  
Scriptures. Nevertheless we tell them, that  
which is false. For the Scripture no where  
saith, that covetousness, pride, luxury, or the  
like sins may be indulged, or permitted: Nei-  
ther is this any other than the inventions and  
council of the malignant one. Wherefore  
(my Beloved) those of us, as are such Con-  
fessours, do shew unto you not the way of  
truth, but the way of perdition: and so  
we first run head-long into the Pit of eter-

nal perdition, and then also lead you along with us into the same; there is onely this difference, that we shall be thrust lowermost, and you cast upon us into those pains. But though ye rich men are not so deeply plunged into those pains as we; yet your condition shall not therefore be the better; seeing your own Reason, and Conscience often tells you, that we in no wise shew unto you the right, and safe way. Furthermore, we in duty ought also (beloved) when we are in the Pulpit, to preach unto you the right way, and in few words, without lying and glossing, to shew unto you the very truth. Which if it ever were needful to do, is now much more needful. But alas! the most of us, are too too foolish, and cowardly, and stand more in awe of men, than of God. Now the reason of this is, that in these our times, matters are come to that pass, that if any of us will speak the very truth, he will hardly be tolerated almost in any Monastery, nor suffered to Preach: and presently another shall be put into his place, who will reject, and confute whatever the former hath said.

Truly (Beloved) things are not right among us; therefore I will not be partial, but speak the Truth. Nay, rather I will

(as

(as the Lord shall enable me) simply set before all our eyes in general, of what state or condition soever we be, our vices, and failings: let what will befall me therefore; I will endure it all willingly, for the love of my Lord God. He of you (Beloved) who is without sin, (if there be such a one) let him cast the first stone at them I have mentioned. What I have hitherto spoken, may, at the first view, seem as if I had onely aimed at my Brethren of our Order. But my intention was nothing less, than onely to mark out them: but my reproof was directed against all those, together with our selves, who hear confessions, and are Preachers of the Word: whether they be Pastors, or Priests, or of some Religious Order, of what rank soever they be, to whom the aforesaid Authority is committed, and given: To all these (I would have you to understand) was my discourse directed. Here now I should say something of the Bishops and other Prelates of great Authority, and Power, who hold many Churches. But I suppose here is not any one present. Nevertheless, least any should think, that if I pass over these in silence, I do it for fear of them, or upon some other consideration, as if I would flatter, and seek

to curry favour ; I shall (I say therefore) say something of them : and there will not be wanting some, or other, it may be, that will go and tell them what I say ; which thing I shall not at all mislike, nor be troubled at. Certainly, in what Province soever any Bishoprick is, the Bishop is the Pastor of that Province, how far soever the bounds of his Jurisdiction or Diocess extends. He is, I say the Pastor, and Head of his Bishoprick, and that, for to feed his People ; and to take all vigilant care, that the whole Flock committed to his charge, be trained up in the due observation of Christian Religion, and Christian Ordinances. But alas ! when as now for the most part the Pastors are blind, no wonder, if their sheep go astray, and become a prey for Wolves. But what need I use many words, when you easily perceive what I hint at ? I fear truly, that many of our great Priests, and potent Prelates, who hold at one time many Churches, are likewise held and entangled themselves in many, and grievous sins ; and are sometimes even worse than thieves, and robbers ; for these onely rob men of their Goods, but these wicked, and unworthy Priests, rob and plunder even God of his Goods ; for all Church livings are Gods, and his Almes, which of right



right he hath given to none, but to such, as are careful to spend them in his service. But when it comes to pass, that such a Priest laden with many Churches, dyes, what kind of Will and Testament leaveth he to his Heirs? Verily, a lamentable one; for the same way, which he walked in himself, doth he shew unto his Heirs. For his Heirs greedily catch his Goods, and hasten with them to the same place of Perdition, whither he is gone before. At least if they dye without Restitution, I am not able in a short Discourse to express, how dangerous their estate and condition is. *But let him who is without sin among you, cast the first stone at them.*

And now in the next place, I must have a word to the Secular Priests, of inferior rank; many of whom (I fear) do too too sinfully, and dangerously lead their lives: Plainly, whatever Priest follows the course of Gamesters, and Fornicators, such a one is worse than Judas, who betrayed our Lord and Saviour: as it may easily be proved.

For Judas was a thief, a slippery fellow, a betrayer of our Lord Jesus Christ. But a Priest, he hath an Ecclesiastical Benefice, which is Gods, who therefore hath granted

it to him, that he should perform his Office, and permits him to take of it what is necessary for life, and what he cannot without inconvenience want; but if any thing remain over and above, seeing that is totally Gods; if he restore not to God in his poor Members, but spends it upon some other unlawful use; such a one truly commits a worse theft than *Judas* did. For such a Priest consumes the Goods of his God at Dice, and divers other wayes doth wast the Almes given to the poor, truly worse than *Judas* did. Furthermore, such a Priest with the same impure hands, fears not to handle his God upon the Altar, with which he hath touched filthily a vile Harlot; and kisseth her with the same mouth, by which God entred; and gives her his heart, which he ought to devote to God alone; and at last breaks his Vow, and Oath, which he made unto God, and therewith betrayes God, when he joyns himself to a woman, when as he ought to be united to God onely: neither doth it suffice him, to do this (as *Judas* did) but once, but he doth it often. Truly, *Judas* did but once receive the Lord in the Sacrament; and peradventure he neither was consecrated, as is the Priest, nor had made a Vow of continence, as doth the Priest. From hence there-

therefore do you your selves now judge (Beloved) whether such a Priest be not worse than even *Judas* himself. Verily, I am sufficiently afraid, that many now adayes out-strip *Judas*. But let all such (I beseech them) consider the frailty of their condition, and uncertainty of their life, and from their hearts amend their lives; which of all things doth most concern them. Truly, I cannot but extreamly wonder, that any woman can be guilty of so much presumption, as to dare to suffer her self once to be touched by any Priest. But now if Secular Priests, who are subject to the foresaid vices, are worse than *Judas* the Traytor: we, who are called the Religious, and live in Sacred Monastical Orders, if we commit the like, we certainly are yet far more wicked. But if a Prelate commit such like, his sins are yet more grievous. If a Bishop, he sins yet more notorious. If lastly the Pope, his sins of all others were the worst, and most heavy. For by how much the higher the station is, by so much the more grievous is the fall, and greater the fault. But if a Virgin dedicated to God, a Monastical Virgin, shall commit any of these things, she doth exceeding enormously sin. For such a one ought both in body, and Soul

to conform her self according to the example of the Virgin Mother. For as our Lady the Glorious Virgin, brought forth her only Son without any violation of her Virginity; so all the consecrated Virgins have made a Vow to follow the example of the Most Blessed Mother, in all chastity; that they may be the better enabled to breed, and bring forth God, the Son of God continually in their hearts. *But who is there here without sin? If such a one there be, let him first cast a stone at all these, I have mentioned.*

But now whilst I stay over-long in reproving onely Spiritual Persons, or the Clergy; you Seculars and Lay-people may suppose I have forgot you: Therefore now I must bring you forth into view also. For neither are you without sin, but even as we, so are ye in many things reproveable. But there is no reason, why any one should cast all that is said, upon another; but rather examine himself, and his own heart; where I believe (if he do it as he ought) he will find so much business at home, that he will hardly be mindful of others faults. But I beseech you (Beloved) do not take grievously those things, which I am now about to speak. Truly, I shall begin with the Supream

Pream Judges and Magistrates of this City. You therefore my Lords the Judges & Magistrates, (if any of you be here) tell me I beseech you, how stands it, and what agreement is there between you and God? Ye your selves know that ye admit no man into your Order, except he be of sufficient age, and have his lawful Wife. And this you do justly enough. But why this is done, ye do not in the mean time well understand. Heretofore in old time, the antient Judges did very carefully and with much prudence enact this; that no young men should be admitted in their Order; but such as had first arrived at a Just age; that so in that time they might attain to the knowledge of the Civil, Imperial, and Provincial Laws; and learn the Laws of their Ancestors, and Statutes of their Countrey. And when they had arrived at a fitting age, and had thoroughly learned all these Lawes; If they were also Just men, and endowed with the fear of the Lord; so that they might be accounted worthy of trust, and fit for such an Office; then at last did the Antients chuse them, and receive them into their Number. That all, who are of your Order, ought to have lawful Wives, it was therefore ordained, least they should desire in their hearts or  
minds

minds any other women, besides their own Wives. Here now, I beseech you, my Lords examine your selves, whether you be exact Immitators of your Ancestors. Truly, it doth not so appear to me: For you admit many into your Order for favour and affection onely; and admit such to sit upon the Judgement Seat, who, as it is sufficiently known, have no fear of God; love riches, and receive money where ever they can get it, caring not at all whether lawfully or unlawfully. But truly such gifts and rewards, which are thus received, whilst they are in Judgement, do subvert, and pervert Judgement and Justice.

Furthermore, you receive Adulterers into your Number, which, yet is altogether unlawful, and in special manner forbidden, that such should be admitted to sit in Judgement; whose lives are contrary to God, and good Lawes. And for this cause oftentimes false, and unjust Judgements are passed; which doubtless the Lord God, the Supream Judge, will heavily revenge at the last day, upon all those, who have given them. For the Lord himself hath appointed Justice; and Judgement is his. If any one therefore turn Gods Justice, into Injustice; he will certainly not suffer it long to pass unrevenge.

Behold



Behold my Lords, ye that are Judges and Rulers of the People, I have chosen to begin with you; because you hold the Supream Power of Judicature. If you therefore reform and amend the Supream Judicatories, of which ye are Presidents; the interiour will easily after your example be reformed: because your Authority will sway with them, and bring it to pass. But if there be neglect on your part in this matter; what ever is done amiss in inferiour Courts, will be charged upon you, as being mostly the cause of it. Believe me, your condition is very dangerous, except you amend your lives. For doubtless Justice is no small matter in the sight of God; but is a business full of difficulty. And we see in the Old Testament, how God was wont grievously to revenge unjust Judgements, Adultery, and Pride: And doubtless he doth the same at this day; although we are grown so sottish, and stupid, as not to perceive it. Beloved, if it be not burdensome to you, I will briefly tell you a strange, and terrible thing; namely, how great mischiefs, and grievous sins had their rise from one act of Adultery, within these few years. Neither will I tell you a Dream, or a Fable; but what I my self know to be true. When

I were in the thirtieth year of my age, and by the Order of my Superiours followed my Studies in a certain Town; I became familiarly acquainted with two Citizens of the place. They were both young men, and very rich Merchants. These two loved one the other entirely, and managed their Trade in common: they had both of them young Wives much alike; who did also no less love one another. And when it happened at any time, that either of them went from home about business; (such trust and confidence had they in each other) he always committed his Wife, his House, and all his Goods to the others care. It fell out, that after I had been acquainted with them about a year; One of their Wives, came to me at a certain time, and privately told me, with a mournful voice, and many tears; That she had been, of a long time, an heinous sinner, and that she should be no better than a fire-brand of Hell. Which when she had said, she shed such abundance of tears, that she could not speak one word more: I being moved with her tears, and suffering with her, in her sorrow, I desired her to lay open the cause of so great a sadness, promising her, by Gods assistance, (whose mercy I told her was infinite) to give her

her faithful Council, At last, she taking heart, she said, Ah Sir, my Daughter N. is not ligitimate, but begot in adultery by my Husbonds Friend. For when, above five years ago, my Husband was a great while from home, his Friend upon a certain time, abusing that too much confidence, which you know, we have in one another; whilst we were familiarly conversing together, fell at last in the sin of adultery with me; and of him I conceived my foresaid Daughter N. Furthermore to aggravate my damnation, I never made confession of this sin, after this my fall; but like the Traytor *Judas*, have nine times since received with polluted heart and mouth, the most Holy Body of our Lord. When I heard this, I wished her, if she desired right advice, to tell me the naked truth, whether she had more then once layn with that adulterer; and also, whether he knew that her Daughter N. was his, or no. She answered, that they had but once (she thanked God) committed that sin, and that they had both so much repented them of it, that if it could be, they would give any money it were undone. Neither could he possibly ever know that N. was his Daughter; because she for certain reasons had al-  
ways

wayes kept that secret to her self. I advised her therefore first, that she should find out some way, whereby she might safely declare the whole matter to her Husband. To which she answered, that she durst in no wise do that. For, if my Husband (said she) should come to the knowledge of this, I am certain, that he would either kill the adulterer together with me, or else be killed by him; and so this thing would straight be spread abroad among the vulgar. Then said I, if you dare not attempt this Counsel; yet at least do this by all means; procure that your illegitimate Daughter be placed in some Monastery, and let her in no case have possession of any part of your Husbonds estate, together with his true Heirs, to their dammage, and the eternal damnation of your Souls; for if she should inherit any part of your Husbonds estate, she would possess it unlawfully. And you may tell your Husband, that you have devoted that Daughter to Religion, and be urgent with him, to suffer you to fulfil your Vow. Accordingly the woman did very oft endeavour it; and I backing her, tryed by many reasons to perswade her Husband; but all our endeavours were in vain. At last I again told her plainly, that if she would

would deliver her own Soul, she must find out some means, in the sweetest manner she could possibly, to declare the whole matter to her Husband; that so he might not take the business so heinously, as she fear'd; and this, before her Daughter be disposed of in marriage; that so at last she might be delivered from this dangerous and troublesome remorse of Conscience. But while she was so long in suspense; It fell out that the two Merchants, by the Mediation and counsel of Friends, made up a match between the ones Son, and the others supposed Daughter; but indeed between the Brother and Sister, who being thus incestuously joyned, wonderfully loved one the other. When I beheld so great iniquity, out of pitty suffering with these miserable People; I tryed divers wayes, if by any means they might be seperated the one from the other. But when I saw I availed nothing, and that the fore-named Virgin N. was with child by her Brother, her Husband; and being called home by the commands of my Superiours; I counselled her, that had committed the first Sin and Adultery, that she should discover in confession her whole sorrow to one Brother N. a pious and learned man, and follow his advice. And so I departed.

H

But

But how unhappily these matters afterwards succeeded with them, (as that Brother wrote me word) I am hardly able to express. And truly, all this Story is of my own knowledge. Therefore how many probably may there be of Brothers and Sisters, and other near kindred, which I know nothing of, which may in other places be joyned together in Matrimony. Truly, I fear, that there is a certain Father (which verily is not fit to be spoken of) that doth commit Incest and Adultry with his own Daughter. Plainly (Beloved) it can not be spoken how many and grievous sins have their birth and original out of Luxury and Adultry. Take it for certain, that Adultry is an enormous crime, and very odious to God. Therefore hath Hell enlarged it's mouth without bound. Believe me an Adulterer, or Adulteress is in a manner worse then a Thief or Robber. For a Thief, and a Robber do but take away a man's temporal Goods. But an Adulterer, or Adulteress, do commit a more heinous crime by committing Adultry. For God himself instituted Matrimony, and therefore it is properly His, and He himself doth so strongly joyn twain mutually together in all faithfulness, that they are called one Body, and ought not to be guilty of the least



least unfaithfulness one to the other, since they have both vowed and promised to God, that they would constantly be faithful the one to the other. A Thief therefore (as I said) and a Robber takes away a man's Goods. But an Adulterer and Adulteress incur the guilt of perjury, and therefore steal that which belongeth to God, and as much as in them is, spoil and rob him. For certainly, sacred Wedlock is ordained of God himself, that it might be his; and that men in much faithfulness and sanctity might beget Children; to this end, that his Kingdom might be filled. Hence therefore now you your selves gather, whither Adultery be not far worse then Theft and Rapine; when as Adulterers steal that, which is Gods: But Thieves & Robbers only take away what is mans. Wherefore (Beloved) beware of Adultery, because it is a grievous and enormous wickedness. Truly. If I would go about to lay open all the dangers and evils springing out of Adultery, this whole day would hardly suffice, and yet I fear I have already been too tedious. I should now speak of Pride, of covetous men, of Soldiers, & their Comrades, and Wives, of handy crafts men, and their Wives; but the time doth not permit. Truly, I have yet many things.

which I shall say in their due time, except I be silenced from preaching. But I warn you beloved, let not any one hit another in the Teeth with these things which ye have heard, because I have only touched the vices of some. For we are all guilty and obnoxious to sin. But if there be any one here without Sin, let him first cast a stone at them, whom I have mentioned. Believe me, as things are with us at present, it doth exceedingly concern us, that with what speed possible, we should amend our lives. Otherwise except we so do; there are some among you, who may live till that time, wherein God Almighty may permit some grievous, and unusual distress, and pressure to happen to men. But arise now, and let us pray the Lords Prayer, and repeat the Angels salutation.

*How after this Sermon, the Master was forbidden by his Brethren to Preach again.*

**A**FTER this Sermon, all the People of the City did talk much, and variously of the Master; some praised him, some dispraised him: but the greater part did commend him, saying, He is certainly a good man, and

and devout towards God, who fears no man, but speaks the very meer truth of himself, and all others. But his Brethren presently after this Sermon, being met together in the Chapter-Room, unanimously concluded, that he should be wholly silenced from Preaching: and they studiously enough endeavoured to bring it about, that they might send him away to another Monastery of their Order. Which when the Rulers, and chief men of the City found out; they went to those Monks, and intreated them to grant License to the Master again to Preach: and likewise inquired of them, what fault they found in him, that they should prohibit him from preaching. Who answered, He hath offended our best friends, and turned them from us. To which the Lords said, we believe that ye have no better Friends certainly in this City then we; who can better take care of your affairs, and be more helpful to you then we. Therefore we fear that ye rather take it ill, that he publicly reprov'd you. But he reprov'd us also, and yet we take it not ill. Truly, ye ought rather at any price to purchase such a man, as he is; who dares speak the Truth to men; and as it ought to be, fears not the face of any man. So therefore out of respect to the Lords, and

for their sakes, It was not only permitted to the Master, to remain there, but also to Preach again. Afterwards the Master was intreated by the secular men, to Preach again another publick Sermon to them. He told them, he would do as they desired, if the Lord gave him leave, the very next Lords day after the ninth. Now that Lords day was *Judica*, or the Passion of our Lord in *Lent*. And when the appointed day and hour was come, a very great multitude of common People came together; thither also came the Master, and thus began his Sermon.

*The Masters second Sermon to the vulgar People.*

THE Gospel for this present day, Beloved, is that, where the Lord saith to the multitudes, and to the chief Priests: *Who among you convinceth me of Sin? If I say the Truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God, heareth the Words of God; For this cause ye hear not, because ye are not of God.* This Gospel is long, and because I hope most of you have heard it of your Pastors to day; omitting it, I do make my Discourse so much the shorter. But be-  
fore

fore I begin to obtain Grace, let us call upon the Mother of Mercy, and all Grace, saying *Ave Mary*, &c. Truly (Beloved) of right, when as to day, the Lords-day after the Lords Passion is Celebrated, I ought to Preach of the Passion: but I have so many things to speak of, that that cannot be done at this time. For it is exceeding necessary, that we should be spoke to of our sins and failings. Nevertheless, if it may be commodiously done, I have purposed upon some convenient day this week, to Preach a Sermon of the venerable Sacrament; who namely have right to come unto it, and who not: and what it is hindreth them, who ought not to come. Afterwards also, I shall make a Sermon upon the most bitter Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. And indeed at this time, Beloved, I can say nothing to ye, unless I do speak of the Community by their several Names and Titles. Wherefore also I would have you take this advice, that if any be here, to whom my discourse shall not belong, let not them wrest it as spoken to them; neither let them judge them, to whom peradventure it shall belong; but give God thanks, that he hath preserved them from evil: But they, who shall understand themselves to be guilty, and whom my discourse

shall note, let them the more speedily repent, and amend their lives. For this will be exceedingly necessary for them to do. This common true saying is found in almost every man's mouth; when we say that *Adam* and *Eve* did exceeding wickedly, whilst they followed the Devil, and transgressed the Commandment of the Lord their God. But if any one rightly did weigh it, how many (do we think) would he find now a dayes entangled in more grievous sins, then *Adam* and *Eve* were? Certainly, every rash, and swaggering Soldier, and his proud, and lascivious Wife, do commit far more and greater evils, then *Adam* and *Eve* did. *Eve* indeed followed the Devil, and violated the Command of God. *Adam* also had respect to the Woman, and being willing to please her, he transgressed the precept of God. But presently for the violation of this one command, they were both driven out of Paradise: and in such a manner hath the wrath of Divine vengeance raged against them, and all their posterity; that from that time, for the space of five thousand years, it suffered none to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And in the mean while *Adam* and *Eve*, were compelled so long in the Limbo of Hell, to wait in expectation, until that full-

ness



ness of time came, wherein God the Father did vouchsafe to deliver them by his only begotten Son.

Truly (Beloved) I know that *Adam* and *Eve* never neglected, but this one command; neither have I found in Scripture that they committed any other grievous sin. If therefore Almighty God hath so severely & horribly revenged upon them this one sin; there is no cause certainly, why these proud, immodest, and vain Women do discommend them for many things, and accuse them of many crimes. For verily be certain of this; if these Women go on in those courses, and actions, in which at present they live; I know not what will become of them. For they not once only as *Eve* did, do transgress the Divine Commandment, but too too oft, in divers manners, at divers times, and seasons. Wherefore ye proud, foolish, and rash Women, repent at last, I beseech you: especially since ye know that the Lord of Majesty, whom ye offend by your iniquities hath so grievously taken vengeance upon *Eve* for sin; yea also, and doth yet daily even too severely take vengeance; as ye in the pains and distresses of child-bearing learn by your own experience. Repent, Repent, I say, ye Women beloved in Christ. Otherwise except  
ye

ye so do, certain it is ye lead too too dangerous a Life. And truly, it is a thing much to be bewailed, and a thing exceeding pernicious and dangerous, that we, who attend upon the hearing of confessions, should connive at such things in you, whereby we are exposed to as great danger as your selves. But your Husbands stand in greater danger, who imitate *Adam*, in indulging, conniving, and permitting you not once, but frequently to play the *Eves*. But hear me thou, who ever art such a Husband, such an *Adam*; Certainly, God hath not committed unto thee thy *Eve*, for this reason, that thou shouldest suffer her so oft to violate his commands: but rather for this cause hath he given her unto thee, that thou shouldest keep her, and take such care of her, as not to suffer her to neglect so much as one precept. But now thou dost very carefully regard her, who, when thou oughtest to hinder sin, art a helper of her to commit sin. But whilst you connive at those evils, which she committeth, you your self are not innocent, but are partaker of her sins, and so oft transgress the Divine Commandment. I exceedingly fear (Beloved) that at this time there may be found some Confessors, who fear not to administer the Holy Sacraments to very many,

many, both Men and Woman, whom notwithstanding they know to lye in some mortal sins. And most of these, as I fear, at the end of their lives, are drowned in the depths of despair, and so incur the miseries of perpetual damnation. For the Devils are very busie about such like worldly men, when they come to dye. For they grievously set before them all the sins, which ever they committed. And what heart, think ye, can those wretches have then, when they have their whole life long been given to this fallacious World; and when the Devils are so exceeding subtil, and full of craft to deceive? Now therefore, dearly Beloved, if any of you know themselves guilty in any of these things, let them blush (I beseech you) before God and Men, and make hast to reform themselves. For it is certain, that many Jews and Pagans are not a little scandalized at your lives. Yea, verily the Pagans, when they hear that Men and Women among us are cloathed so shamefully, and immodestly; they, as I have been informed by those that heard them, say thus: Christians probably are not true men, because they go cloathed so like beasts; but peradventure have something in them of the nature of beasts. And ye all know, that the  
Jews

Jews dwell among us here in our Country : Who, when they hear (and they hear it but too often) how injuriously we treat God by our impious and horrible swearing ; say, as it hath been told me by others, nay, and as I have heard my self, when upon a time I spake with them concerning our Christian Faith : they thus say. Can we believe that he is our God, whom you say is your God ? Certainly, we are thus periwaded, that if your God were of so great power ; he would in no wise permit, nor suffer it to go unpunished ; that you oft do so impiously deal with him with wrathful minds, too oft swearing, and for-swearing : Doubtless if he were God, he would never bear it. Wherefore ye need not doubt, but ye unmeasurably sin, whoever give the reigns to your tongues thus impiously to swear. Believe me, God will not suffer this long to go unrevenge'd, but either here, or in the World to come, where sins are too too bitterly punished ; will take vengeance on you for it. And you unchast Women, who wear so lascivious and wicked habits, take it for certain, that the most pure and great God will speedily punish terribly the wantonness of your Garments : for he will not long endure it. Where is now that honest, chaste, modest, and well-ordered

Con-

Conversation of yours? How hath the Devil robbed you so of it almost all? I fear, I fear truly, that God the just Judge will call you to a severe account for your impudent and sinful manner of life. For he himself saith: If a Man look upon a Woman, or a Woman upon a Man, if one lust after the other, he hath then committed Adultery in his heart; and now death is compleated, though yet the act be not done. Whither I pray shall a man turn his Eyes; where he may not behold you, O ye scornful Women? Alas! your condition on both sides is too too dangerous, Ye are always blaming *Adam* and *Eve*, because they broke one only Commandment; though they have for that transgression suffered so many evils even to death, yea and after death: But it were better that instead of *Adam* and *Eve*, you did reprove & blame your selves; seeing it is to be feared, that ye have oftner by far transgressed the Commandments of God than they. But whereas in this Discourse I have only mentioned Military men & their wives; let not therefore any one think, that I intended to mark only them. For truly, I would put to rebuke all what ever, both those that are above, and those that are below the rank of Soldiers; namely, Merchants and their Wives,

Wives, and in brief all those that are upon the fore-mentioned accompt blameable, of what rank or quality soever they be.

Again, it is not a little to be feared, Beloved, that there are many to be found who are reputed Christians, & yet so live, as that if they should depart out of this world in that their evil life, they would find it worse with them, than with the Jewes. For the Jewes know no other, but that they may Lawfully practise Usury, to get their living. But it is not at all hidden to Christians, that it is sinful and unlawful to practise Usury; and yet notwithstanding they do it. Therefore they will be thrust below the Jews in Hell. And here I would have all those in like manner to be understood, who before God are Usurers, and yet would not be accompted, nor called so by men. And lastly, I here note all those, who practise unjust morgaging, and hunt for unlawful gains from monyes. I remember truly, that I lived in such a time, when it was exceeding rare, and unusual to use morgaging, and few at that time did practise it. And if then any contracts were made with the condirion of Re-emption, they were sincere and simple, and according to God; so that I my self also did permit some to make such contracts. But I will tell you upon



upon what accompt I did it. There came at that time to me certain honest men, one of whom said unto me : how do you advice me Sir ? I have bought of this man some certain Rents for my money upon his inheritance. He also is come to me beseeching me for Gods sake to do this thing for him ; to permit, that writings be made, that may contain this condition, that if God enable him to redeem his estate, I would permit him for Gods sake so to do. Having heard this, I thus said to the man : tell me prethee, dost thou eye or intend nothing else in this matter, but only to do this purely for Gods sake ? To which he answered. Truly, nothing else do I mind in this business. For what else should I seek, or what else should move me, but only that it pitties me that this mans estate should be for ever made over to me and my Heirs ? otherwise I had rather possess the Goods as my own, according as I purchased them. In this manner, Beloved, I sometimes heretofore consented to redemptions ; but take notice, I beseech you, how purely, how simply, and according to God, heretofore this was done. But now in these our times, we do by our pride and covetousness, so pervert, and corrupt these redemptions, that for the most part they are  
more

more then half Usury before God: the blame of which is almost mostly ours, who are Confessors, because we permit such things. Behold, I will tell you, Beloved, into what great misery in this age we are flidden. Not very long ago, there happened a certain Citizen to come to me, and said to me: I beseech you Sir, give me some advice in a business, which I shall declare to you. Behold, I, and my Wife, and my Sons have not sufficient where withal to maintain us according to the fashion of this age. And therefore I have thoughts to sell my estate upon condition of re-emption: but I would do nothing in it without your advice. If therefore you so advice me, I fully purpose so to do. I made him this answer, I will not in the least advice you to it; but rather dissuade you by all means I can faithfully and sincerely. He answered me, I have not then wherewithal to live according to the custome of these times. To which I answered, Take it for certain, if you follow that course, you have told me, you will grievously offend God, and will commit some mortal sins. For I would not have you ignorant that all contracts of buying and selling Rents, or Possessions, in which the buyer reserves power to himself, ever to call in again,

again, when he pleaseth the principal sum; (all such contracts I say) are not free from usury: for in all those contracts, in which upon loan any gain is expected, by covenant or principal intention explicitly, with what colour soever; notwithstanding many endeavour now a dayes to excuse it: in all those contracts, I say, for the most part, there is a mixture of usury. So therefore; first, you will make your self partaker of anothers usury, if without pressing necessity you make use of a common Usurer; or else you draw your neighbour, who before used it not, to practise usury. Secondly, you incur the guilt of avarice, (which is one of the seven capital sins) whilst that moves you to do this. Thirdly, also you will sin by pride, whilst you do this: for this end, that you, and your wife, and your children, may be conformable to the luxury and pomp of the Age, and be like to others. Wherefore, for these reasons, I dare by no means advise you to it; but rather, with what faithfulness I can, I give you this counsel, That you live contented with your lot; and with those goods which God hath granted you, after the manner of ancient time; and be thankful to God, who doubtless will succour you so doing, that you shall have what is sufficient

I

for

for you. Certainly, if you acquiesce in this my counsel, and do as I tell you, you shall perceive it will be profitable to you, both for body and soul. Then said he, I give you thanks, Reverend Sir, for this wholesome counsel, which you have bestowed on me, which I fully determine to follow, and let passe that which I had thought to do. See now Beloved, whither we are fallen. Afterwards I perceived that the same honest man the same year went to a certain other Doctor who permitted it him, as lawfull: so that he sold all his Estate under the forementioned doubtfull condition of Redemption. Plainly 'tis we make for you the way too broad, and yet in truth it is not so; but strait is the way which leadeth to life. *Math. 7.* Alas, which is never enough to be bewailed, things are come to that passe now a dayes, that there are few affairs among Christian People, which are wholly just and sincere. Alas for grief, how many blinde guides are to be found at this day? And if the blind tumble upon the blind into Hell, both their conditions will be so much the worse. Wherefore, Beloved, it very much concerns you to look to yourselves: for I fear that the friendship of the men of this world, is too dear to many of us *Confessors.* I will tell you something of my self,

self, and I'll speak the simple truth ; but I beseech you let no man be scandalized thereat. At a certain time it came very importunately into my mind, that I must go beyond the Seas, and expose my body to the dangers of death, and must preach the Word of God to the Pagans, and try, if by God's help I might be able to convert any of them to the Faith of Christ. This will increased in me, and waxed so strong, that I were now resolved even to prepare me for the journey, and did think with my self of the manner, how I might come thither. And when I were carefully taken up with this matter, it fell out on a certain morning, that when I had returned to bed, and was now fallen asleep, me thought I heard one speaking to me these words : Whither do you intend your journey ? There is no need to pass the Seas to Pagans, for you shall find many of them here among Christians, who whilst they bear the Name of Christ, live worse than Heathens. When therefore you have preached so long to these, till they attain to a true life, and a life worthy of a Christian ; then at last take free leave to pass to the Saracens. This admonition was given me in my sleep three times, and alwayes in the same form of words : from whence it came to passe, that

I recalled my mind from contriving to passe the Seas.

Hence now something should be spoken of the Merchants, but I fear that I am too tedious. Notwithstanding I will speak a few words concerning them. There are some Merchants now a dayes, who do get their estates by very unjust wayes, and such as are exceeding contrary to God, and that by so various and diverse *unjust means*, that I cannot here relate them all. But be sure of it ye Merchants, whereas ye sell any thing, in what Country soever, the dearer, because of time respiced for payment, (*dearer I say*) than otherwise you would have done, if the buyer had paid you ready money; whatever you receive in this case above the just price, all that extends to usury before God, seeing ye extort that from your neighbours. The same is to be thought, whilst you exchange your money, assign, or lend it for a certain term; which when it cometh, ye know what gain is to be allowed you out of every hundred crowns, as for your Interest (as you call it) because of the dammage which ye pretend to receive by the forbearance; in the mean time concealing the word Usury. Alas, what end I pray will there be of your covetousness? If ye will be wise Merchants, why do ye



ye not rather get eternal riches, by making to your selves friends of the mammon of iniquity, to wit, the poor, whose is the Kingdom of Heaven, of whom ye may hold it, and into which rich men shall not enter, without works of mercy? *Wo unto you* (saith the Prophet) *which gather together those things which are not your own. How long will ye heap up against your selves thick clay?* In the mean time indeed, you and your Confessions may cover over these things with a cloak in this world, and defend them by some false comments; yet they will not therefore be just before God. But when we come into eternity, there every covering will be taken away, and what ever shall be unjust, will appear to all clearer than the light.

Luk. 16.

Hab. 2.

But to be briefer, look upon your own selves, I beseech you, ye dealers in the world (for this is chiefly necessary for you.) and take heed to your selves; for very many times in your buying and selling ye tell lies, and impose upon your neighbour, sby certain subtil glosses and equivocating words. How ye spend also Feastival days, which ye ought to have in reverence, and observe, ye best know. Finally, how many customs and will-ways are now risen up, ye are not at all ignorant. Furthermore, all these things, we,

who receive your confessions, ought to reprove : but alas, many of us do dissemble more than is fitting, and wickedly tolerate you. Truly I fear, that some of us receive sometimes some presents from you, and because of them permit and suffer you to heap and keep together by any manner of means, as much as would suffice an hundred to live on. Which goods, though they should be justly got, yet you ought nevertheless to relieve those that want out of them, for to that end were they conferred upon you by God.

Luk. 16. Verily that rich man who was cloathed in purple and silks, and sared sumptuously every day ; when he was dead, he was buried in Hell, for this cause doubtless, because he kept to himself the goods granted to him by God, and used them according to the lust of his nature. And although we read of nothing that he unjustly possessed, or that he took by violence any other mans goods ; yet he was compelled to undergo the endless torments of Hell. Hear now ye Merchants, behold your selves I beseech you, and examine your selves : For hardly, as I truly judge, can it be, but where ye gain such great sums of money, and so much superfluous goods, but that ye possess the same with Pride and Coyetousness ; yea, and with many other great

great sins, which usually for the most part mingle herewith ; Which you your selves would plainly discover, if it were not irksom to you rightly to search into, and examine the matter. Here by the way, Ile tell you, Beloved, what befell me within these five years, if I rightly remember. There came to me a certain Merchant, a very rich man, and entred familiarly into discourse with me, and among other things told me, that there were due to him in a certain forreign Country, very much, and very great Commodities. I required of him, how it came to passe that so much was owing to him in a forreign Country ? He answered, that his Wares were there sold, and delivered to Chapmen, and that they owed him so much. Again, replied I, tell me the truth ; if any one would have bought of you those Commodities at somewhat a lower price, but yet with ready money, would you have let him had them ? Yes, doubtless, answered he, I would have let him had them, and had rather have had it so ; that with ready money I might have bought other Commodities. I replied and said, be sure therefore whatever you receive for respiting of time, more than you would have taken in ready money, all that is unjust. And although it hath not got the name

of Usury among men, yet so it is called before the right and just judgment of God. Contrarily, replied he, It is otherwise; for this is the manner and custom of all Countries to do so. I answered him, That matters not, neither is it therefore just and equal; for you make such will-customs, and naughty inventions, and have made them; and therefore it is the worse. Will ye make customs, which are contrary to God, a Law? it will therefore also be a custom to descend into Hell. Wherefore, as I said before, take it for certain, if you any where whatever, or in any Country whatever, sell any thing dearer, because of time given for payment, than you would have done if they had paid ready money; or, if you get gain for money lent, because of time given for payment; whatever you thus receive, it is all to be reckoned among unjust and ill-gotten goods; and therefore also must be restored to them from whom it was received, if ever you will be saved. When he heard this, he said unto me, Truly you are a hard man: my Confessor alwayes permitted me this thing. I answered, Your Confessor peradventure took your money, and permitted you that, which God himself with all his Omnipotency cannot permit you. See here, Beloved, how per-

pernicious a thing Covetousness is. That rich Merchant thus went from me, not so much as in word testifying any purpose ever of amending his life. Believe me Beloved, it is above all things necessary for us all, from our hearts to amend our selves, and to reform our evil lives : for we live in too too perilous times ; and it is to be feared that yet more perilous times are at hand. But what shall I say, when as it is told me, there are not wanting some who do blame me, as if I did preach too rigidly and severely? But I doubt not constantly to affirm, that there is not one of all these standing here before me, who would not preach much more severely than I do, if so be he had experienced what I have ; and that it lay upon him as his duty ordinarily to preach, as it doth on me. And if it would not be too tedious to you, I would tell you some things, which would be not a little congruous to this place, and would be profitable for you to hear it. *Then very many of the People altogether with one voice said, Speak assuredly Sir, for you shall find us patient and benivolous hearers.* I rehearse therefore unto you, Beloved, a thing that befell my self. Upon a certain time I sat alone in a Cell, and when I had began to think of the wonderfull things

things of God, and how strange the state of the Church was at this time, how all good order was too much neglected, and went to rack. In the midst of these meditations, I heard a certain voice with my bodily ears, speaking to me, although I saw no body at all.

But after this manner it spake: Arise, now you must experience some things, whereby you may be enabled so much the more certainly to speak the truth openly to your neighbours. And at this last word I were deprived of all my sensual discerning, and being taken into an extasie, I was in that very rapture permitted to see into Purgatory; where I beheld the torments of multitudes of men, (many of which I knew) so painfull, and so intolerably bitter, and so immense punishments, and sorrows so intense, and fearfull, that no reason, no understanding is sufficient to express them. In brief, take it for certain, that I beheld there so many, so various and divers kinds of torments, in a wonderfull manner painfull, that such a terrour and trembling hath seized upon me, that all the natural joyes of this life can in no wise make me merry; and if I should live yet an hundred years, I think I should never be merry, except God should make me



me so by some supernatural means. But I beseech you, Beloved, let not any be offended at this, that I would relate such things as these are unto you. Truly I fear, that some peradventure do think, that in divulging these things, I seek glory to my self. But let me assure you, I seek or wish the praise of no man, nay nor the wealth of any one for this reason : for I am abundantly contented with those things, which in our Monastery, according to the custom of the Convent are provided for me : Nay, I am never without fear, lest peradventure I should take that which is superfluous, of those things, which are set before me in our Hall. And certainly I believe that there is not one here present, who, if he had seen and experienced those things, which I have seen and experienced, namely, such horrible and fearfull punishments, but would peradventure have been better contented with a small provision and allowance, than I am. Therefore let none of you be scandalized at my words fore-spoken. In good earnest I find no other cause why God would have me to see such things, but because of my sins and iniquities, that I might both reform my self, and the more boldly speak to others the truth, which I have certainly known ; and  
in

in no wise flatter their wickednesses and sins. And hence, if I were sure for this cause to be put to death, I should nevertheless speak the naked and simple truth. Truly, I saw some in those most vehement pains, and was taken with extream admiration, that they should desire to remain so long, in so great anguish, sith some of them had departed this life many years before, who, whilst they lived, I did believe were both good and pious; and yet they did undergo in those places of Purgatory so great and ineffable punishments, that no man can in this life ponder or understand them, as they deserve. Wherefore this, I from my heart do counsel all, that we slight not Purgatory; but be speedily converted, and seriously reform our selves. Certainly if you did know, how above measure valuable and profitable the present time is, you would not esteem it so little, nor suffer it to passe away so foolishly; for truly, when we are brought out of this transitory time, into things future and eternal, there exceeding speedy, simple, right and rigid judgment passeth upon those, who suffer this present time foolishly to pass away. But what shall I say, Beloved? for if I attempt to speak any thing to you of divine Justice, that is so immeasurable, strict,  
and

and rigid, that I fear some of you may take occasion of despair from hence: If contrariwise I would discourse of his infinit mercy, how ready he is to shew it to all in this life: I fear on the other hand some would presume so upon it, that they would live worse and more foolishly, and so may admit of some such sin, as (it were to be feared) God would not pardon either here or hereafter. I fear truly, Beloved, lest I have been too tedious, although many things yet remain to be spoken of divers sorts of men, and divers affairs; because that we have gone too far astray from the right way. And in truth if I did, laying aside all things else, attend only the duty of Preaching for this whole year, I think I could in no wise sufficiently lay open all our defects and sins. But when the Lord shall order it, I will further speak of this matter. Arise now, and say the Lords Prayer, with the Angels Salutation.

After these things, it fell out on a certain time, that the Master made a journey to a certain Inclusory, in which there abode five Inklusis, which earnestly entreated him, to preach to them a Sermon of the true and perfect secluse life. To whom he said, that he would willingly do what they desired, if the Lord so ordered it, upon the Lords day

next

*The History of the Life*

next following. When therefore that Lords-day was come, there came together to that place a multitude of men, and the Master began his Sermon thus.

*The following Sermon was preached upon the Lords day of Sexagesima; the subject of it was this: namely, Why St. Paul kept in silence his Rapture into the third Heaven so many years: That the Gifts of God come by afflictions, or at least are confirmed by afflictions. Of a twofold Self-denial, one of Nature, the other of the Spirit. Lastly, What belongs to a true Inluse.*

I knew a man in Christ above forty years ago, &c. 2 Cor. 12. 2.

**S**aint Paul, Beloved, hath delivered unto us in his Epistles to day a whollom and necessary instruction. But because the said Epistle is too long, I will not rehearse to you all of it, but only part of it. The Apostle therefore saith, speaking of himself, *I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years since, such a one (whether in the body, or out of the body, I know not, God knoweth)*

taken

taken up even into the third Heaven. Here my Beloved, take notice, I beseech you, how the holy Apostle kept in silence this his Rapture, for full fourteen years together, neither would he bring it forth in publick until it was permitted him so to do by God. He did not certainly, as some men now a dayes, who, when they receive peradventure some small grace from God, instantly break forth, and tell it others without the permission of God, and declare it sometimes to such men, as do as little understand thereby, what it is, or whither it tends, as themselves; whereby also very many times it comes to passe, that such Grace is taken away from such like Bablers, and given to another more illuminated. Therefore see, my Beloved, that without the permission of God, ye never divulge the gifts, which are conferred upon you by him, being sure that few are to be found now a dayes, who are endowed with illuminated reason or discretion. And therefore heed is to be taken that the gifts of God be not brought forth suddenly, and without his licence. Now that it was permitted to *S. Paul* by God, to speak of those things which had hapned to him, it was permitted by God for our warning and necessary instruction; namely, that if it should

Against  
rash bab-  
lers of  
their vi-  
sions.

To whom  
the gifts  
of God  
do come.

should happen that he should infuse into any one of us his preventing grace, without any merit precedent; such a one should not afterwards be shaken with terror, if he suffer him to be afflicted, even as it usually befall blessed *Paul*. Yes verily, it is to be taken for certain, that the gifts of God come by afflictions: but if they come before afflictions, certain it is that yet they ought to be confirmed and proved by afflictions. When as therefore it is a matter of so much nobleness and profit to endure adversity; for that reason the Almighty God hath suffered so heavie afflictions to meet with all his beloved Saints; and for the same cause he gave leave to the blessed Apostle to relate to us his afflictions: for he saith in this same Epistle; *Are they the Ministers of Christ?*

2 Cor. 11

*I speak as a fool, I more: In very many labours, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure; in deaths frequently: five times of the Jews received I forty stripes but one: Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I was in the depth of the sea; in journies often, in dangers of rivers, in dangers of robbers, in dangers from my kinred, in dangers from the nations, in dangers in the city, in dangers*



gers in the desarts, in dangers in the sea, in dangers among false brethren, in labour and toil, in watchings, in hunger and thirst, in much fasting, in cold and nakedness. &c. These and many other things the blessed Apostle commemorates in this dayes Epistle, by him to have been endured; in reciting of each of which, lest I should be the more tedious, I will adde only this one, which among the rest he adjoyns, saying, *Lest the Greatness of Revelations should lift me up, there was given me a prick of my flesh, the Angel of Satan, who might buffet me: Because of which I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me: and he answered me, My Grace (Paul) is sufficient for thee: for strength is perfected in weakness. VVillingly therefore (saith he) will I glory in my infirmities, that the vertue of Christ may dwell in me.* 2 Cor. 12.

Now therefore, Beloved, after that St. Paul, a vessel of Election, hath in this his Epistle abundantly proved unto us, how great the profit of Afflictions is; truly it deserves, that we should give credit to so great an Apostle, and imitate and follow him. Yea, truly, it cannot be, that ever we should attain to a praille-worthy and fruitful life, except we willingly renounce the pleasures of Nature.

*What it  
is to re-  
nounce  
Nature.*

Because to renounce Nature, is nothing else but voluntarily to refuse and deny all things in which Nature is delighted; those things only excepted, which upon a rational account are necessary to the sustentation of Nature; which shall be such things as may be helpful to us in the service of God, and in the coming to God: all other things are to be forsaken for God's sake. Neither indeed can any one experience, or receive the superior sweetness of God, except he bid *adieu* to the sweetness of fading things, and to the inclination and pleasure of the senses. And hence the Apostle saith, *If ye will live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if by the Spirit ye shall mortifie the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.* Here let us contemplate, and (to the utmost of our power) follow the every way lovely example of our Lord and Saviour, so as the same Apostle doth admonish: *Put off* (saith he) *the old man, and put on our Lord Jesus Christ.*

And furthermore, there is yet another much more noble and excellent Self-denial, than that is by which we deny Nature; and that is, when willingly we renounce the Spirit; which how it is done, I would have you mark. After that the Spirit hath wholly tamed the flesh, and reduced it to obedience,

ence, and now is climed above all caducal and slippery things; then it taketh, as it were, a leap into everlasting good things themselves, which doubtless are much more delightfull to it, both in tast and fruition, than natural delights were before. When therefore any one cometh to tast, and enjoy those excellent highest goods, he ought then no lesse to renounce those delights and affluences of Spirit, than before he was fain to do those of Nature; so as he may know how to leave to God his gifts and operations, according to his will and pleasure. This Renunciation also is not a little difficult at the beginning, to them who have tasted God according to the deliciousness of Spirit. This same Renunciation is called *Poverty of Spirit*, of which the Lord speaketh, saying, *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*. Yea verily, oft-times it falls out that some come to that passe, that they exceeding subtilly snatch and draw what ever shineth and savoureth in them, to themselves, into their ground, into their will and arbitrement, neither leave themselves to God by way of mortification: But whoever are thus, they doubtless use the grace and gifts of God too too unfruitfully; the reason of which is, that when it is not hidden to God, that unless he

infuse into them light and savour, they will quickly depart from him ; therefore he retains them with some sweet lesser comforts, lest they should altogether forsake him ; Such like men are as yet exceeding frail & weak ; because they are such as are full of self-will, and love and imbrace the shadow instead of the thing it self : who have also this fault, That though they are mostly outward and external, yet they think themselves after a manner to be of us : but they are too much deceived in their opinion.

Furthermore, they that from the bottom or ground , resign and offer themselves to God, and who do receive from him sweet and bitter alike ; who, lastly, though the influence of light and savour be withdrawn from them, do not in any wise therefore depart from God ; these are the true internal ones.

Verily, whoever after this manner , now spoken of, have denied themselves, and with a willing mind have penetrated through the sweetneses, aswell of Spirit as of Nature, and have got above them ; these certainly have made a profitable and fruitful thorow progress, and have penetrated through more than can be spoken. But afterwards such have need of very much vigilancy and watchfulness,

ness, whereby alwayes they must diligently observe themselves, be circumspect and careful that they may ever persevere in very great humility: For their hellish enemies cease not then, but continually endeavour by all means they can to draw them back.

Believe me, Beloved, profound resignation, and voluntary denial of our selves through our whole nature, is a certain good beginning, if so be it be joynd with true humility: Even as *St. Peter* saith, *Dearly Beloved, humble your selves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in the time of visitation.* And, O that we could learn, how we might attain to true subjection of spirit in profound humility, that when God doth withdraw from us sensible Grace, we may be able easily to resign it to him, and to restrain our appetite or desire, so as not willingly to covet it. This is that which *St. Dionysius* saith, When God makes his abode sensibly in my soul, I am filled with such joy, and it is so well with me, that if he should bestow upon me such authority, that all creatures that very hour should no lesse obey me than himself, it would not go so wel with me, as it doth by his presence only: But when his sensible presence is withdrawn from me, ( I confess ) then some desire of it layes hold

on me : But when that happens to me, my weakness surely is the cause of it ; Seeing *Solomon* saith, that in all the Works of God we ought to have rest and peace. Behold that breathing and languishing desire holy *Dionysius* accounts his weakness : Why so ? but because the holy man clearly understood that himself was not as yet fully resigned to God, when as he so desired the presence of God ; seeing it is the greatest resignation, to resign our selves to desertion , and in all manner of desertion to be resigned : Which thing doth chiefly belong to them, who have deliciously experienced the sweetness of God.

It behoveth us truly, Beloved, so manfully to strive, that we may be made so prudent in God, that we may be able, having divine assistance, to transcend and penetrate all creatures, untill we attain unto God himself. There now we are taught in the Holy Ghost to tread upon, by our reason, and get above all natural things, that we may be able with *St. Augustine*, to say, *All creatures are unto us an high-way unto God*. So as what ever we happen to see or hear, of what nature soever it be, we may have the skill to bend all to our own use, and turn it to the best, and to draw some good out of it. Certainly a Christian ought by his reason so oft and so

humbly



humbly to exercise himself, and so often to penetrate all creatures, until he hath lost all created things; and he should so strongly and manfully, and that not once, but many times, abstract himself from all things, until he find God alone the joy of his soul, and the beloved of his heart; of whom the blessed Apostle speaks, when he saith, *Who adhereth to God, is one Spirit.* In which transformation, the spirit of such a one is transformed, and is, made one with the one. If any one in this matter would venture himself, and perfectly renounce both himself and all creatures, he surely would by Gods help, or by the power of God, overcome all things; which thing *Paul* witnesseth, where he saith, *I can do all things in him that strengthneth me.*

I Cor. 6.

Philip. 4.

Go to now, Beloved, make speed, be doing, hasten, learn to live, being also sure that a man may in this present time attain to that condition, that he may experience so immense supernatural joy, such as all creatures cannot afford even until Dooms-day.

Lastly, Come on then, and let us all endeavour to learn, by what means we may be made true Worshippers, *worshipping the Father in Spirit and Truth.* But I fear lest I am too tedious, sith those Includes have en-

John 4.

*What the  
Duty of  
Inclusis is*

treated me, that I would declare unto them, what is the duty of a true Inluse : And now this I shall dispatch in a few words, and will tell what manner of one every true Inluse ought to be : It belongs therefore to every Inluse, that she be simple, and both in mind and body, that is, both inwardly and outwardly to be an Inluse. It doth not become her to look out at the windows, and be inquisitive what is, or what hath been transacted here or there ; it is meet that she should lead so pure, so abstracted a life, that if she should pour forth prayers for all the Souls that are detained in places of Purgatory ; she may be found worthy, sufficient, and able to free them all from thence. Truly an Inlusive life, is no small matter : It behoveth plainly an Inluse, so sincerely and purely to live, that she may be able to obtain all that of God, which the Universal holy Church, by the seven-fold grace of the Holy Ghost, doth obtain : If she do otherwise, she is not a true Inluse. She ought also to lead such a life, that if all Ecclesiastical Laws were taken away, it might not at all prejudice her to God-ward : But alas ! things are now come to that pass, that Inluses entertain Guests in the evening, and in the morning administer to them many things ;

*The corrupt  
State  
of Inluses.*

things : which is not the Office of Inluses, but of Hospitallers.

And moreover, it belongs to an Inluse, diligently to observe silence, except only upon reasonable and real necessity ; as also purely and earnestly to pray. It belongs not to her to perform the office of an Hospitaller, and to discourse with men ; but this rather is her duty, that she perpetually persist so resolutely and immovably in true and divine resignation, that she may be able, even with a sensible delight, and joyful consent, alwaies to wait the sensible presence of God, and nevertheless persevere faithful unto him, and therewith to renounce all creatures for his sake.

*Inluses must keep silence.*

But now you may hear some Inluses say, That it is their duty to exercise themselves in vertues towards their neighbours ; but such ought to have betaken themselves not to an Inlufory, but to an Hospital rather, and there humbly exercise themselves about the Members of Christ, which then had properly belonged to them as their office ; for this they ought faithfully to do, who live in Hospitals.

*To whom it belongs to serve the Poor.*

Again, others say, I must serve and succour my neighbours for God's sake. But neither is this the duty of a true Inluse : for

if

if she would more narrowly look into it, she would surely finde, how that secretly it doth fight against her purpose. Every true Inluse ought to lead to pure, so absolute a life, so free and so abstracted from all creatures, that her merits may be able to succour and help all universally, that are inrolled under the Name of Christ.

But yet there are others, which say they are of so weak and frail a nature, that it is necessary for them, that they should relieve themselves, by discoursing with men, and by that means succour their infirmity. O such miserable Inluses! how wholly are they deceived by the counsel of the malignant one? Take it for certain, Beloved, whoever seeks any thing else in an Inlufory, than for Gods sake willingly to suffer, such a one doth unadvisedly betake her self thereto.

Now some may be found, who enter into an Inlufory, that in it they may be fed by Alms with peace and ease; which Alms notwithstanding they would but very unwillingly beg as exiles, in a despicable manner openly in the streets: but as many as are after this manner, do rashly take to themselves the name of Inluses (*alias* pure Nuns:) and it would be much better for their souls, that they should lie as Exiles in  
the

the high-way, in such a plight as might move the minds of all passengers to pitty. But when any Inluse enters into an Inlufory, ſhe ought to offer her ſelf purely, freely, nakedly, and voluntarily to Chriſt, for to undergo the Croſſe for all men; bearing in mind thoſe words, which Chriſt ſpake upon the Croſſe, *My God, my God, why haſt thou* Mar. 27. *forſaken me?* That bleſſed and venerable *Mary Magdalen*, was a true Inluse; ſeeing ſhe of her own accord renounced all the comfort of creatures. Certainly, God the Father Almighty ſent his Son unto the Earth, and would have him take upon him humane nature, that in it he might ſuffer; and yet notwithstanding we alwayes ſlie ſuffering. But whatever we can do, it is moſt certain, if we will take the nearer way, and ſooner, and more ſubtily penetrate all things; that cannot otherwiſe be done, than by following the moſt true Example of our Lord and Saviour, by ſuffering at leaſt in ſome meaſure.

And nevertheleſs, which here I bring for our comfort: Truly God the heavenly Father is not ſo hard and ſevere towards us, as he hath been towards his only Son. For verily, if we with our whole ſtrength offer our ſelves to God for to ſuffer, ſo as that we

we become willing of our own accord, and freely to undergo, whatever pleaseth him we should bear, neither in the time of affliction depart from him, neither do fly from afflictions when they meet us: When he shall take notice of this, he will the more speedily, when he shall see time, take away from us all afflictions, and will fill us with his divine and supernatural, pleasant and sensible consolation; which truly to whomsoever it happens, namely that he experience in himself this festival and pleasant Solemnity, such a one afterwards relishes no earthly festival. He is not made joyful like common men at the solemnity of a Masse, nor at the feast of *Easter*, or of *Pentecost*, nor finally at any other feast. This huge internal feast only, namely, whilst the Omnipotent God cometh unto him with his supernatural and present Grace in Jubilee and Triumph; this inward feast (I say) doth fill him with abundant joy. And that at what time of the year soever it be transacted in him, at the same time all the aforesaid Solemnities and Festivals are together celebrated and fulfilled. Wherefore (dearly Beloved) we ought willingly to bear whatever adversity shall happen unto us: for whoever he be that doth by sufferings attain to this supernatural



natural and pleasant Solemnity, this man becomes thereby exceeding prudent, essential, and well composed, and obtaineth so great a wisdom by the influence of the Holy Ghost, that he doth abundantly understand what belongs to him to do, and what to leave undone. Then certainly all his in him are made fruitful, yet he then hath nothing at all of himself: but alwayes persevering in great humility, supposeth himself an unprofitable servant, and evermore keepeth himself in a certain filial and amorous fear; neither feareth any thing else, but lest he should not fully satisfie the beloved of his heart, his most loving Father. In this state, (that is) when he attaineth thus far, all his own private institutions, and customs of his own will, that is, such as are taken up of himself, fall off, and his conversation becometh simply, truly Christian, and erect to heavenly things. In the mean time, he is nevertheless unknown to all men, except one of the same life, who hath experienced the same grace, and solemnity.

God Almighty grant, that we may learn by afflictions to endure, and by sufferings, merit to attain unto this supernatural, joyful and happy solemnity, the eternal Truth it self, our Lord Jesus Christ bringing us to it,

it, who, with the Father and Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, one God, throughout all Ages of Ages. *Amen.*

*Three certain excellent Institutions.*

**V**Hosoever thou art who at any time hast a desire to attain unto God, and unto the most excellent state, which in this life can be obtained, it will concern thee studiously to observe these three things which I do add.

1. The first is, That in all things thou aim at God, and the honour of God, and not thy own, but chiefly at his will, & not thy own.
2. The second is, That in all thy doings and turnings forth, thou studiously observe thy self, and take diligent notice of thy bottomless nothingness, and attend with continual diligence, what-ever thou be about, what is doing in thee; and lastly, have an eye alwayes upon thy own ground.
3. The third is, That by no means thou intrude thy self into those things which are not committed to thee, but let all things alone in their own state and order. Let those things that are good, be good. But the evil judge thou not, but rather being turned into thine ground, there persevere, diligently and sedulously

dulouſly hearkning to the voice of thy Father, exhorting thee that thou abide in him conſtantly, even to the end.

*Whoſoever ſhall obſerve theſe two things following, ſhal attain to great matters.*

**F**Irſt, Let him be both inwardly and outwardly in Truth, and from his very ground and bottom and not in words only, little and abject: Let him be (I ſay) in his whole underſtanding, in his ground, and in his own eyes, without any diſſimulation, wholly little and nothing.

1.

But, ſecondly, Let him be endowed with the love of God, not that ſensual, which we call Love, but eſſential; that is, that he do inwardly in his ground purely intend God. Wherefore every one ought for this cauſe to be naked and freed from all ſelf animadverſion, underſtanding, and ſenſuality; becauſe God Almighty is naked and free, ſo thereby the Spirit may be fitted and prepared for his pure and naked eſſence: for ſo it is neceſſary that the ſoul be naked and empty, that it may be capable of his ſecret miſteries. Wherefore there is a neceſſity that every one endeavor to cut off all thoſe things, in which he findeth any thing of Self.

2.

Of



*Of the DEATH of the MASTER,  
and how after his Departure he ap-  
peared to his Friend the LAYICK,  
giving him an account of his severe  
and horrible departure out of the bo-  
dy; declaring that he endured that  
instead of his Purgatory: and also  
assuring him of that huge Joy, and  
everlasting Felicity, which he had ob-  
tained from God by means of his whol-  
some Doctrine.*

**H**ere we must by no means let  
passe, how the oft before-men-  
tioned Master, did daily make  
proficiency in a true, humble,  
and spiritual life, and increased very much  
in vertue; Yea verily, he was made so pru-  
dent in the grace of God, that whatever was  
to be done in that City or Country where  
he dwelt, whether it had been Spiritual or  
Secular, all much desired to make use of his  
Counsel and Wisdom, because he was ac-  
ceptable to them, and they had confidence

in him, and puttruff in him, and did obey his counfels. He made alfo very many Sermons, as well to Secular as Spiritual men, after the form of thofe which we have already above recited. And when he had laudably finished nine years in this fo profitable and fruitful life, and (as it is faid) was acceptable and dear unto all in all that Country and Town. Thefe nine years being finished, it pleased the moft high God to receive unto himfelf this his Servant and beloved Friend, and no longer to leave him in this exile. And becaufe he had decreed to tranflate him to the celeftial Mansions without Purgatory, he fuffered him to fall into grievous and lafting pain and ficknefs of body, fo that he lay for twenty weeks fick of a Palfie, and fuffered very fharp torments.

When twenty weeks were now expired, he by Divine Grace underftood not obfcurely, that within a few dayes he fhould depart this world, and that God would put an end to his torments.

Knowing this, he defired his fervants that they would take care to bring his Layick unto him, and that they fhould acquaint him with his approach and departure, and that he had no fmall defire to have him prefent

L

with

with him when he died. Without delay, when the Layick knew hereof, obeying the Master, he came to him speedily; and being very familiarly received, he enquired how it was with him? To whom the Master answered, Truly I think that that day is not very far off, wherein the Lord will take me out of this world. Wherefore you may know that it will be very acceptable to me, and no lesse comfortable, if you will vouchsafe your presence with me when I die. But, saith he, I would entreat you, that you will take those Paper Books, in which you shall find diligently written all whatever hath for a long time been spoken or transacted between us: There is also something of my Life, some things which God vouchsafed to work by me, his miserable and unworthy Servant. And, if you shall see fit, and the Lord grant leave, compile them all into one little Book.

To these things the Layick gave this Answer: Behold, Sir, I have by me five of your Sermons, which I write from your mouth: if therefore you think fit, I will put them in among your other Writings, that of them all one little Volumn may be put forth under your Name.

To



To whom the Master answered; I entreat and beseech you ( dear son ) with as much love as I am able, That you put not out any thing for my sake, nor under my name. Neither indeed are they mine, neither would I they should be known either in my life, or after my death. But they are all Gods, who vouchsafed to do them by me, a miserable wretch. But yet if you do think that it may be profitable to my neighbours, and make for their edification, to publish those things, I am not against it, but that they may be set forth, only with this caution, that you mention not me, or my name. But you may write after this manner, ( to wit ) *The Master said, or did this or that*, alwayes concealing my name. But be careful of this, that when you have compiled this Book, you deliver it to no body in this City to read, lest peradventure they should apprehend it to be mine: but rather carry it away with you into your Country.

Finally, the Master had many other good discourses with his Layick for eleven dayes together, even to the hour wherein he gave up the ghost.

When that hour was come, he said thus

to the Layick: I would fain (dear son) have on your part your consent, That if it shall please God, I may return unto you in spirit after my Death. To whom the Layick answered, If it shall (said he) seem good unto God, I shall like it well that his will may be done in this matter.

Moreover, when the Master was even at the point of death, falling into an Agony, he expressed such horrible and fearful gestures, that his Brethren, and as many as were present, from the sight of those gestures, fell into no small fear, affright and sorrow. And so at last he ended his last hour, as much as can be gathered from external signs, with great horror. And when he was now dead, almost all the City were moved, because he was exceeding dear to them all universally.

Furthermore, when as some of that place had taken notice how familiarly the (mentioned) Layick stuck to him to the last, they went about to honour him, and invite him to their feasts. But when he perceived this, he presently fled from the City into his own Country. Being onward upon his journey, and travelling now upon the third day, about Sun-set he came to a certain Village; And because he could not farther travel by  
reason

reason it began to be dark, neither could find in that Village any publick Inn, he requested a certain honest man, whom by chance he met in the way, to lodge him and his servant, and bid him take of him what he pleased. To whom the man answered, that he was ready with a willing mind to do what he desired, if he would accept of such entertainment as he could make him: and accordingly took them in to lodge them: he lodged the Layick after the best fashion he could, but brought his servant into a barn upon straw. After they were layen down, the Layick being awake in the night, heard a kind of slender voice near him, yet could see nothing: thereby he began to be a little affrighted. Then the voice speak to him thus: *Fear not, dear son, for I am the Master.*

When the Layick heard this, he said: I would very willingly know of you, Sir, if at least it be the will of the Lord, how it is with you, and what was the cause, that, as far as we could perceive, you finished your life so horribly and fearfully? Verily some of your Brethren began, as it were, to doubt of you; and truly I fear lest your severe end hath offended some of them.

To

To which the voice of the Master answered thus: *I will even now open those things to you. Be certain it was so decreed of God, that my soul as soon as it was gone out of my body, should be received by the holy Angels, and by them be defended from the Devils, that they should bring me no further trouble, nor that I should any more see them, nor have any thing more to do with them afterwards; And therefore it behoved me to shut up my life with so fearful an end, and to undergo it instead of Purgatory. And in truth the malignant spirits did bind me fast with so great perplexities, and did assault me with such subtle and crafty falacies and deceits, that I thought I should have utterly despaired: And if my voice had not been taken away, I had sent forth such cries, that it had been wonderfull to have seen my calamity; hence might my Agony which my Brethren did discern, have been taken notice of. But God Almighty rendered me a plentiful reward for that pain and torment: for, as soon as my soul was gone out of my body, it was received by the holy Angels, who brought it into Paradise, telling me that there I must wait five dayes without fear or care; neither fear that the Devil should henceforth*

do

do me any mischief; and finally, that I should undergo no more labour: only I should want for those five dayes the glorious society of the heavenly Inhabitants; which being performed, I should be wholly clean, and that then they would return with joy, and bring me with great exaltation into inestimable never to be ended joyes. More than this (dear son) enquire nothing of me, for I have now told you what-ever I can tell you; neither have I any licence to adde any thing further; But I beseech my God that he would blesse you, and that he would be your eternal rewarder in everlasting joyes, for that faithful Instruction and wholsom Counsel you gave me.

Then the Layick said, I beseech you my honored Master, when you shall come unto God, earnestly intercede with him for me. After that, whatever the Laick did either ask or speak, it was in vain, neither could he get so much as one answer more from him. Which when he perceived, he endeavoured as much as he could to take a little rest, but in vain, for he could not sleep one wink; and so lay awake, impatiently expecting day. Day breaking, he took his Pen and diligently wrote to the Prior and Brethren of the

*The History of the Death*

the dead Master, how he had appeared unto him, and all his words he had spoke to him.

The eternal Truth, our Lord J E S U S CHRIST, grant to us, that we may conform our selves to his lovely and dilectable Image, and follow it to our utmost power, to his praise and glory. *Amen.*

*To God Almighty thanks.*

---

F I N I S

---





Thomas

hi mas

mas

mas

mas

mas

Samuel Johnson

me

Thomas

Johnson